A Reasonable Account,

Why some Pious, *Nonconforming Ministers* in *England* judge it *Sinful* for them to perform their *Ministerial Acts*, in *publick*, *solemn prayer* by the *Prescribed Forms of others*.

Wherein several of their *Arguments* are modestly *propounded*, *opened* and *Justified* against pretended *answers* given to them, either by *Irenæus Freeman*, or *Mr. Falconer*, in his book entituled *Libertas Ecclesiastica*, or others.

The strength also of the several *arguments* brought by them, for the *lawfulness of forms* to be used *universally by ministers*, in their publick ministrations, is fairly tried.

1 Pet. 4. 10. *As every man hath received the Gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold Grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*, &c. *As wee believe, so wee speak.*

Rom. 14. 23. *He that doubteth, is damned if he eate, because he eateth not of faith: For whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

Habemus quidem nos etiam in Ecclesiâ nostrâ Agendas, & ordinem in sacris celebrandis servandum; sed nemo alligatur precibus aut exhortationibus Liturgiæ nostræ: proponuntur tantum ut paradigmata, quibus precum aut exhortationum materia & forma, quoad substantialia judicantur, non ut iisdem verbis astringantur ministri. *Didoclavii Altare Damasc. p.* 613.

Anno 1679.

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To the Reader.

WE suppose thee not so much a stranger in our Israel, but that thou knowest, that from the 24 of *Aug.* 1662. very many hundreds of ministers (and many of them (their greatest adversaries being judges) of no invaluable parts, and worth) have not onely been removed from the Ecclesiastical livings of which they were possessed: but also incapacitated to take any other. And very many of them with their wives & children left to live meerly upon the charity of their friends, who formerly valued their ministry. Had it been for any *immoral debauchery*, for any *ignorance* or *negligence* of or in their work; they had but been deservedly dealt with, & had deserved no great pity: but it was because for *fear of sinning against God, they durst not do diverse things, which were made the terms of their abiding in their station.* Possibly, had the like number of any sort of persons in *England*, for so many years been debarred of making any advantage of their education for a livelihood,

their complaints would have been louder then theirs have been. We are not ignorant how much ſome of our Brethren (at eaſe in Zion) have magnified theſe poor mens portions of alms, during their begging time. To which wee ſhall onely ſay, That though wee ſhall ever adore Gods goodneſs in enlarging the hearts of ſome, that theſe good men have been kept alive, and from a ſcandalous beggery; yet we are pretty well aſſured, from the diligence wee obſerve in thoſe that love thus to talk to heap up *parſonages* upon *parſonages*, & *fine cure's* & *dignities* to make one livelihood; that wee do not think, what ever liberty they give their tongues, that any valuable perſon amongſt them would have been content to have changed lots with the beſt of the N. *C.* or to have been tied up to feed at the *Rackſtaves* they have fed at. Wee deſire for ever to bee thankful both to God, and our moſt gracious ſovereign, for the liberty wee for a little time enjoyed to *preach the Everlaſting goſpel*, though as to maintenance it extended (as all know) no farther then to begg *cum privilegio*. Under theſe circumſtances wee might

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reasonably have expected that our Brethren should have *had pity upon us because the hand of God had touched us*. But alas, in stead of it, we have seen continual reason to cry out with Job, *How long will you vex our souls, and break us in pieces with words? These ten times have you reproached us, and are not ashamed that you have made your selves strange unto us, why do you persecute us! and are not satisfied with our flesh? yet had they been our enemies that had done thus, then wee could have born it, but they were not they that magnified themselves against us. They are men that were our Equals, our Acquaintance: Wee took sweet counsel together and went to the house of God in Company.* Had they been some of our Brethren who felt the smart of former times for adherence to his late *Majesty*, or using the *Liturgy* (then prohibited) wee could have born it, though they had mistaken the due objects of their wrath; there being none of us, that wee know of, who hurt them: many of us, who heartily pitied them, to our utmost served them, to our power relieved them. But the truth is, these are not the men, from

many of theſe wee have found the meaſure we meted to them: But they are thoſe whom wee thought of our mind & could heretofore diſpenſe with their conſciences to ſerve God without *Liturgy* or *Ceremony*, & in all things do as we did; if not ſerve the time to ſome degree beyond what wee durſt diſpenſe with: Theſe moſtly are the men, who have turned themſelves into every imaginable form, in which it could be thought they could abuſe their brethren the ſervants of the ſame Lord & Maſter. Some (not it ſeemes ſo good at an Argument) think it worth the while to peruſe the pamphlets & ſermons, printed during the late troubleſome times; & to pick out *Such ſentences* as any preſent *Nonconformiſt* then uſed, & to put them together to repreſent the *N. C.* as men *ſeditous*, *rebellious*, *ungovernable*, *&c.* forgetting in the meantime that ſome *Doctours of their own*, and in great requeſt, are far more deeply chargeable then any *N. C.* wee could ever yet hear of. And forgetting alſo, the *Act of oblivion*, which was neceſſary for every man of them that in thoſe times was worth any thing, & that to ſave his life: & that a Great

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perſon (then whom the church had not in his period a greater friend) was at laſt found ſo far to need it, as his friends thought fit to plead it in bar to ſome Articles againſt him. Another comes forth and picks out ſome paſſages, (the product of a Luxuriant wit and fancy) in ſome *N. C.* ſermons and writings, theſe he ſtretcheth upon the tenter, & thinks he hath made *N. C.* ridiculous enough to the world: Forgetting all this while, that there was a *great Prelate* (not many years ſince) out of whoſe ſermons fourty times as much might have been returned them, and improved to a far other advantage to the diſhonour of their way, if this would have done it, or could have been judged a fair way of dealing. Others gather up all ſentences they can find out of the *N. C.* of *former times*, and their buſineſs is to repreſent the *N. C. inconſiſtent to themſelves: men that can never tell what they would have*, &c. In the mean time forgetting how the circumſtances are altered; how many things are required now, not required then: and as to thoſe things which are the ſame, how ſtrangely our circumſtances

are varied: beſides that ſince their times matters have been argued at a another rate then they were before: and that the preſent *N C.* did never ſwear into the ſenſe of their forefathers.

Another thinks it the eaſieſt way to abuſe them, by feigning dialogues betwixt *Con. & Noncon.* there hee can make the poor *Non. Con.* ſpeak as ſimply as hee deſires, and this it ſeems is a great Trophy. Another complements them not thus far, but falls upon them with a *cartwhip* and all the *Rhetorick* of *Billingsgate*: and then writes another book to perſuade the world, it is his duty to revile them. He thinks to kill them with envenomed words, & then to ſay, *He hath done God good ſervice.* Moſt of them make it one ingredient in their ſermons and diſcourſes, *That the Non. Con. are a pack of aunces, men whom they have no hope to convince, that have nothing to ſay for themſelves, but are perfectly factious, biaſſed, & prejudiced perſons.* Wee refer thee, *Reader*, but to Dr. *Parkers* & ſome others ſcripts, & if thou haſt ſo much patience, do but there read with what *Moral* language (the firſt of them eſpecially) hath

hath treated perſons to whom he is far inferiour both in age and learning, but he hath received a deſerved anſwer. The truth is, All theſe are but ſerving another deſign: who ſees not that there is a *New meſs* of *Divinity* bringing into the world, which is not like to be well digeſted, or received indeed while the *N. C.* are in any reputation, but wee ſhall leave that to other hands. As to our preſent purpoſe, *Reader!* If our Adverſaries could have ſatisfied themſelves to have repreſented us guilty of all manner of errors in our converſation; wee might poſſibly have truſted our repute to thoſe who every day ſee us, and know our way of life: but when this is not enough to them, unleſs they can alſo perſwade the world, that wee are *fools*, and have nothing to ſay for our ſelves, ſo as it is but a vain thing for their *Rabbi-shipps* to diſcourſe us. When in truth, they have ſaid nothing in anſwer to what hath been ſaid by ſome of us, which any, but themſelves, will call Reaſon.

——— *quis ſit iniquæ*
Tam patiens gentis, tam ferreus ut teneat ſe.

This hath made us (who have other

work enough to do) to give thee the trouble of these following sheets. Every one who knows any thing, knows that Six or Seven things must bee done by us, before wee can bee admited into a capacity to take any livings, and so bear our share in what they call *the Church of England*, none of which wee can submit to; not because of *scandal onely*, (though the Duke of *Ormonds* domestick chaplain would make the world believe so) but because we judge every one of them unlawful: and have arguments, which appear very probable to us, to evince them such. Amongst them this is one, *Wee must ordinarily perform our ministerial acts in Prayer, by the prescribed forms of others.* Wee believe that of all things required of us there be many think, we have least to say for our opinion in this. This is it wee have fixed upon, and have given thee some of those arguments which makes this appear to us *very probably sinful.* Wee have not willingly omitted any thing, any of them hath said in answer to any of them, nor misreported any of them. Wee make thee our judge (Reader) whether they have said

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any thing amounteth to an answer. If they can destroy the *probability* which these arguments appear to us to have, wee shall then put some of the other Six things in dispute: but till then wee need go no farther. Wee have been a little the more concerned to do this, because wee have observed, *That in the time of his Majesties most gracious Indulgence*, Some who appeared not before, appeared to justify the lawfulness of *all and Every thing* required of us; if it were possible, to persuade the *Parliament* to believe, that there is no reason for any indulgence towards us. Amongst others the *Reverend Mr. Falconer*, a *Norfolk minister* (at this nick of time) ingaged himself; with what success, (so far as he hath spoken to the point under our hands) wee have examined: and freely leave the judgment to every unbiassed, understanding *Reader*, Wee could have wished so worthy a person, a better argument, or better time; for it is now that time of the day as to those things, as a man can promise himself little repute from writing about them: there being hardly room left for a new wit to croud in, wee have not willingly balked

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any thing *Mr. Falconer* hath said (for wee had nothing to do with what he saith in justification of our Liturgy) being not yet come so far as to dispute the lawfulness of these or those forms. Wee have desired to treat *Mr. Falconer* with that honour which wee truly have for him, though wee be of another mind to him; and think wee have made it appear he hath not said enough to make of his mind, any reasonable person otherwise minded. But, *Reader*, as to this Read and judge; and the good Lord lead thee and us into all truth, and bring us all to *one mind & one heart*.

A Rea-

A Reasonable Account, *why Some Pious*, Nonconforming ministers in England *judge it* Sinful *for them to perform their* Ministerial Acts, *in* publick, solemn Prayer *by the* Prescribed Forms of others.

Chap. I.

The Question stated, What is not the Question? What is? No question about the lawfulness of forms in general, nor forms of a mans composure for his own use, nor about any good use of forms, nor about the lawfulness of the use of scriptural forms, nor about short ejaculations: But onely concerning the Lawful use of forms of Prayer composed by fallible men, & prescribed to others, to be by them ordinarily used, in stated, solemn prayer, whom God hath fitted for the ministry by giving them the Gift of prayer. The negative asserted.

§. 1.

AMongst all *Paralogismes*, there is none more unworthy of a *Scholar*, then, that which the *Logicians* call, *Ignoratio Elenchi* where the *Opponent* cheats his *adversary*, and the *hearers*, with an argument that seemes to conclude against the *question*, but indeed doth not; nor is there that wee know any matter in controversy, where

where in dispute, this fallacy hath been made more frequent use of, then in the *Question* under our present debate. Let us therefore first truely state our *Question*, that our adversaries may know what we speak, and whereof we affirm and not loose their labour in proving what we do not deny, nor bring *arguments* no way concluding the thing in *Question* betwixt us.

§. 2 The subject of the Question is, *Forms of Prayer dictated or prescribed by other men, to be ordinarily used in solemn prayer by ministers of the gospel, furnished by God with the gift of prayer, and having a natural liberty to use those gifts.* The Question is *whether the use of them bee lawful or no?* We deny it, & say wee have arguments which appear to us very probable, whence wee have formed a *particular judgment of conscience*, that they are *Unlawful*, that is, *That without sinning against God*, we *cannot ordinarily use them, in the discharge of our ministerial Act in solemn prayer.*

§. 3 Hence appeareth. That wee are not disputing 1 *Whether there may bee a good and lawful use of Forms of Prayer.* Wee desire with all thankfulness to God, to own and acknowledge the profitable labours of those, who have drawn the matter of prayer for more ordinary, & more extraordinary occasions into Forms; from whence both young scholars, and private Christians, may bee taught the ordinary method, and matter of prayer. And allow the same use of good *Prayer-books*, as of good *sermon-books*, for *Instruction* of those that are less knowing. It is onely the use of them *as our Prayers* is in question betwixt us. 2 Nor

2 Nor do we question, the lawfulness of using all *forms of Prayer* for *our Prayers*; or part of our *Prayers*. If there can be found any *forms of Prayer*, which either *God* or *Christ*, or any in Scripture deriving authority from him, hath commanded to bee used, undoubtedly we ought to use it, whether it be under such an express command or no, we believe it may bee used as a part of our prayer, though we do not think our selves obliged to it. 2 *If any minister distrusting his memory, or invention, shall think fit to compose a prayer, or more prayers for his owne use*, we doubt not but he may do it; he serveth God here as God hath given him the gift, & we should be loth to condemn him. The question is onely of *forms* composed for our use by *others*, & those neither pretending to the *Authority* of *Christ*, or his Apostles.

3 Nor do we question the lawfulness, *of any persons using a form of prayer* 1 We do *believe it lawful* for such persons as are to join with others in prayer, to make use of *his words* who *speaketh*, which can bee but a form to them, did we say it is lawful? yea, it is *Necessary*. 2 We do also believe it lawful for him *that ministreth* in prayer to others, to use the prescribed form of anothers composure, *if hee can do no other*, we mean: if *hee hath not the gift of prayer* to which many private Christians have not attained; yea, and many whom the church, in the beginning of Reformation, was forced to use for ministers; and we should not find any difficulty to allow other ministers also to do the same,

same: Supposing them immediately hindred by God (which often happens by some diseases in the head) that at this or that time they cannot use the gift they have. The Question is onely about *Ministers*, and such as *have the Gift*, or might have it, *and are not by the hand of God immediately hindred* so as they cannot exercise the gift, which they may do *Ordinarily.*

4 Neither is the question about *short Ejaculations*, but *solemn, stated Prayer.* Wee are not so ridiculous, as to think wee may not say, *Lord have mercy upon us*, or the like, because *it is a form.* The Question then truly stated is this „*whether it bee* „*lawful for ministers ordinarily to perform their mi-* „*nisterial acts in solemn, stated, publick Prayer by* „*reading or reciting forms of prayer, composed by other* „*men in obedience to the commands of superiours?*

§. 4 From whence it appeareth, That all arguments brought to prove the lawfulness of *composing forms*, or *ministers composing them for their own use, and so using them, or peoples praying by the form of him who ministreth, or Christ commending a form to his disciples, or God prescribing forms of blessing, or Davids or other holy penmen of scripture composing, or proposing, or using forms, (if it could bee proved that they were at first composed, & commended for constant use, and so used generally) or from the lawfulness of the using of them by and commending them to such, as had, or have not the gift of prayer, or the use of short ejaculatory forms.* Are perfectly ἀσυλλόγιστοι arguments that proceed ex *ignoratione elenchi* and cannot conclude the

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Question. All that we affirm is this, That our „consciences do, from arguments which to us at „least seem highly probable, judge. *That it is unlawful „for ministers having the gift of prayer, ordinarily to „perform their ministerial acts in solemn, stated, publick „Prayer; by reading or reciting forms of prayer com„posed by other men confessedly not divinely & imme„diately inspired, although our superiours do require „this of us.* What those arguments are, which to us appear highly probable in the negative part of this Question, we now come to declare.

Chap. II.

The first Argument, drawn from the nature of the Gift of Prayer, considered as a Mean given us by God in reference to the Act natural & proper, therefore the use not to be omitted. The Propositions opened & proved. The Insufficiency of six answers given to this Argument. A 7th given by Mr. Falconer examined and found also insufficient. The Assertion freed from diverse absurd consequences which some would incumber it with. The Argument not conclusive against the lawfulness of hearing men praying by forms.

§. 1.

OUr first Argument we thus state,

To omit a mean for the performance of a Religious act given us by God for it, & being natural & proper, at the command of man when we perform that Religious action is sinful:

But for a minister having the gift of prayer, ordi-

narily to perform his ministerial act in prayer, by reading, or reciting forms of prayer composed by others confessedly not divinely inspired, is for him to omit a natural & proper mean given him by God in order to the performance of such Religious act, and in the omission of it to perform such Religious action; Ergo.

That a mans *Gift*, or Ability fitly to express his mind unto God in Prayer is given him from that God, from whom come all spiritual gifts, *every good and perfect gift* (as the Apostle speaketh) we think will be denied by none who understandeth any thing of the Scriptures. Nor that this Ability is given to a man by God, as a *means* in order to help him in the performance of the Act, for to what end else, can any imagine it given? which maketh it to bear the Notion of a *Divine Mean*, and being so, it must be *most Proper*, unless men will pretend to be *wiser then God*, and that it is most *Natural*, is as obvious: now that such *Gifts* must not be *neglected*, the Apostle is plain, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee* A precept extending as well to one *ministerial gift* as another. But least any should say, we do not neglect that, the use of which superiours prohibit: We put in the word *Omit*, now who so in the performance of the act doth not use *This Gift*, doth most certainly *Omit the use of it*, and about the lawfulness of this *omission* at the command of men is the Question. We judge this sinful, and that partly from Scripture, partly from Reason.

§. 2 We judge so from Scripture, 1 *Pet.* 4. 10, 11. *As every man hath received the gift, so minister it one*

to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, as the oracles of God: if any one minister, &c. The Apostle is evidently there speaking of gospel ministrations, and giving a Rule about them, his Rule is this, Ἕκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβε χάρισμα, εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ διακονοῦντες. As every man hath received the *Gift*, ministring αὐτὸ, the substantive to that must be χάρισμα. This is the same which the Apostle expresseth in a little different phrase. *Rom.* 12. 3. ὡς ὁ Θεὸς ἐμέρισε μέτρον πίστεως. As God hath divided to every one a measure of faith. *v.* 6. τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν χάριν. According to the *Grace given to us.* The Apostle makes the gift τὸ αὐτὸ, that which we are to minister, and we are commanded to minister *according as we have received it.* Now in administrations, by other *mens forms* (and prayer is the one half of our ministry) we neither minister *The gift*; not as *every one hath received the gift*; but as we find in the Book, or in the *forms prescribed.* A gift indeed we use, *Reading* is a gift, but not the gift of prayer.

§. 3 But if we had no such expres Scripture, *The very light of Nature and Reason, would make this very probably appear to be the will of God to us.* 1 Because we use *in an act of worship a less proper, less natural, and perfectly human mean*: and in the mean time we omit a *more proper*, more *natural* & *Divine mean.* 2 Because wee cannot use *other mens forms*, omitting our own gift; but we must *omit a mean given us by God for the act*, to use a *mean* under no *Special divine prescription.* And we think it but reasonable, that nothing but a *special*

divine preſcription, ſhould controle a general rule, whether written in Scripture, or approving it ſelf to our Reaſon. Eſpecially, if it be in matter of *Divine worſhip*, and to be done ordinarily. This is our firſt Argument, delivered and opened with as much freedom and plainneſs, as we are able to expreſs it in. We have indeed met with Six or Seven anſwers, but ſuch as we cannot acquieſce in; we will fairly relate them all, and ſhew why they apear to us by no means ſatisfactory.

§. 4 Some have gone roundly to work, *denying any ſuch gift, as the gift of prayer*; But this is either to deny what is evident to ſenſe: viz. *That there are ſome perſons able fitly to expreſs their minds to God in prayer:* or *to deny the Scriptures* which ſay, *Ja.1.17. That Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh from above, from the father of Lights.* Beſides, That it ſtubbeth up all Liturgies of Prayer by the roots, none it ſeems having any ability to make them. But thoſe who have thus anſwered have been very few and very invaluable.

§. 5 Others therefore tell us, *That all miniſters have not this gift, and it were unreaſonable to preſume it in ſuch a clergy as that of England, conſiſting of 9, or 10000 perſons.* To this we anſwer. If they who anſwer thus, intend by *all Miniſters*, all who are ordained by men, or, all thoſe whom the church in ſome ſtreſs of neceſſity is forced to make uſe off in ſtead of miniſters, have not the gift of prayer, we do agree it: But if they mean that, *All thoſe who are ſent of God into the miniſtry have not the gift of Prayer,* we think we ſhould too much treſpaſs upon the

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reverence we owe to God, if we ſhould grant, That hee ſendeth any into his work, whom hee hath not firſt fitted for all the parts of it.

2 We do grant, That there may be ſuch a ſtate of the church when for the preſent, it cannot be furniſhed with perfect miniſters (by perfect, we mean ſuch as are tolerably fit for all the parts of their work) Our forefathers experienced this, both in the beginnings of our Reformation in *K. Edw.* & in *Qu. Eliz.* time, as alſo did our *Forefathers Brethren* in other churches: They were ſo far from finding perſons enough fitted to *pray & preach*, that were well affected to a *Reformation*, that they had much a do to find ſuch perſons enough, that could read; And it is ſaid, the *Priviledge* in our courts of *Judicature* which perſons guilty of theft (ſeparated from *Burglary* & other crimes) have, comes from this defect of former ages: And we do believe that the *Orginal* or *continuance of Liturgies* upon *the Reformation*, owes it ſelf in a great meaſure to this. But we ſay, Theſe were but *Tunquam miniſters*, better theſe then none, their Reading may give the people ſome inſtruction. But 3ly ſuppoſe ſome that muſt be made uſe off for, the preſent neceſſity of the church, have not the gift; muſt they therefore who have it be reſtrained in the uſe of it? We do indeed think, that it will be hard to find nine or ten thouſand ſcholars in *England*, furniſhed with the *gift* either of *praying*, or *preaching* in any tolerable manner: and one great reaſon is, Becauſe they have been ſo tied to a *Liturgy*, that they have never applied themſelves to

the ſtudy of the Scriptures, and their own hearts, as they ſhould: but to tie up all to the uſe of ſuch forms, is the ready way, never to have ſuch a number. Therefore this anſwer is far from a ſatisfaction.

§. 6 Another hath told us, *That the ſame gift may ſerve for ſeveral uſes: and he that uſeth it to one uſe, is in ſome caſes excuſed from uſing it in another: eſpecially, if he be hindred by authority. This gift he ſaith, may be uſed another way both in the worſhip of God, & out of it: In the worſhip of God, becauſe the ſame faculty which enableth a man to utter a good prayer to God, enableth him to make a good exhortation to people; Out of the worſhip, elſe thoſe Laymen who have it, and are no miniſters, ſin.* This is *Ireneus Freemans* anſwer in his book called Λογικὴ λατρεία. But certainly this author had forgot whereof *he ſpake* By the *gift of prayer* muſt be underſtood, *An ability in man fitly to expreſs his mind to God in prayer, in asking things agreeable to his will.* Can this gift, or faculty be uſed in making *good orations* & *exhortations* to *the people?* or can any thing be ſpoken more abſurdly then to ſay, *That the gift of prayer may be put to ſome other uſe out of Gods worſhip*, (Surely the author doth not think it lawful to pray to Saints & Angels) But by the *Gift of prayer*, he certainly underſtands nothing but the gift of ſpeaking, or at moſt of ſpeaking ſenſe: But ſurely the gift or ability of working in *Braſs*, & iron, & *wood* are differing abilities, or gifts, though at ſeveral times they be exerciſed by the ſame perſon, & proceed from the ſame reaſo-

reasonable soul. But distrusting this answer, he hath a *Fourth.*

§. 7 *That the man sinneth not, who omiteth a gift,* „ *when the using of it would hinder another: and this* „ *he saith excuseth ministers, that they do not pray* „ *without end, but afford some time for preaching,* „ *yea, and for reading too. Yea, he saith, without this* „ *most men would be inexcusable if they did not come* „ *into the church and make prayers there: For in that* „ *they do not, it is manifest they use not their gift. He* „ *applies it, p. 20. If the laws say, that he who will use* „ *his gift of prayer, shall not use his gift of preaching,* „ *but lie in prison or worse; it is manifest, that it is better* „ *to use one of these gifts, then by using them both, to be* „ *suffered in the use of none.* Now, good Reader, judge if it be possible, an ingennous soul should be patient at such Ridiculous trifling, was there ever any further question then, *Whether it be lawful to omit the use of the gift, when we are performing the Religious act to which the gift relates?* Did ever any say, They were bound to use the Gift of prayer at all times, or onely *at all times when they ministred in prayer?* 2 Is the gift of prayer onely to be used in temples, that a Layick may not use it in his family, if he hath it? Is not this a learned *Medium* to prove, That those *who have the gift of prayer, may ordinarily omit the use of the gift of prayer given them by God, as a mean for it without sin, when they are performing the act to which it relates:* because, *When they are not to perform such acts,* but *acts of a quite differing species, they may omit it.* He saith, *The exercise of the gift of Prayer may be omitted*

when it would hinder the uſe of the gift of preaching. He ſaith true, if the hindrance of the exerciſe of *the gift of preaching* proceedeth from the irregular, and diſorderly uſe of his gift of Prayer, by the voluntary act of him who hath both gifts: and ſtands bound to uſe both in their order, he may omit ſuch a meaſure of the uſe of one, as would hinder the due uſe of the other. But certainly he otherwiſe ſpeakes very impertinently, and not like a Divine: For in that I am hindred in the exerciſe of the gift of preaching by a meer human law, is the fault of others; nor can I ſin in it, if I be free to do it, without ſuch circumſtances as are ſinful. It is the ſin of others that we are not ſuffered to do what God hath called us to do, and as he hath required us to do it. Now whether ſuch ordinary praying would not be our ſin, is the matter in queſtion? God needeth not mans ly for his glory.

A fifth anſwer we have met with is, *That a miniſter hath a liberty to uſe his Gift of Prayer, before his ſermon, and in his own private family.* This is more then any thing before ſaid, But, 1 It reacheth not the Queſtion, for ſtil he muſt *Ordinarily perform his miniſterial Act in Prayer in the omiſſion of the Divine mean, given him on purpoſe for the performance of it:* for certainly, *He that uſeth the preſcribed forms of others as oft as he publickly miniſtreth*, doth it *Ordinarily, in his miniſterial act.* 2 If we look wiſtly into the law, we ſhall find it is but an *aſſumed liberty* men take to *uſe their owne gift in prayer before their ſermons*, and this Bp. *Wren* & *Coſins* underſtood well enough,

enough, & therefore would indure no ſuch thing where they had to do. And this *Mr. Kemp* hath told us in print, in a ſermon (ſince printed, preached in *St. Maries in Cambridge*) with this brand upon ſuch practice, That it is a *Geneva* trick, brought in by *John Calvin, & Thomas Cartwright.* For his liberty left him in his family, that is not in his publick miniſtry, beſides that we ſhall ſhew anon, that granting this Principle, *That obedience to ſuperiors in this caſe is our duty*, we lie at mercy for that too: and both theſe pretended liberties may be taken away, when our ſuperiours will pleaſe to ſay, you ſhall do ſo no more.

§. 9 For a Sixt Anſwer, we are ſlightily told by ſome, *That the Church muſt judge, whether her Miniſters have ſuch gift of prayer or no?* But, 1 Certainly it were a ſtrange judgment for a church to make, that none of her miniſters have the gift of prayer. 2 Again we freely agree, That the church muſt judge whether men have both the *Gift of prayer*, and *preaching too*; but we ſay this ſhould be, before she truſteth them with the publick miniſtry: for in ſetting them apart to the miniſtry, she hath paſſed her judgment, *That they have an ability both to pray and preach*, Or elſe she hath dealt very unfaithfully to her Lord and Maſter, by *ordination declaring*, That Chriſt hath ſent thoſe whom he never ſent, when she ought *firſt to have proved them.* 3 If the church hath found her ſelf miſtaken, she ought to confeſs her error by removing them from the miniſtry, who are not fit for it; not to help them, by preſcribing them, what to ſay.

A late *Reverend Author Mr. Falconer* in his *Libertas Eccleſiaſtica*, *p.* 120. hath given us another anſwer, viz. *That gifts may be limited, which (he ſaith) is manifeſt, becauſe by the will of God bounds & limits were ſet even to the uſe of the extraordinary Gifts of Gods Spirit.* 1 *Cor.* 14. 26, 27, 28, 33. This is all which that *Reverend* Author ſaith to this argument, beſides what we ſhewed the weakneſs of in our reply to the fifth Anſwer, now, to this we anſwer, That the word *Limited* is a very general term. We will freely grant, That *Limitations* may be put and that by preſent ſuperiors upon the *diſorderly and extravagant uſe of Miniſterial gifts*, and that is all which is proved by that text, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26, 27, 28, 33. The words are theſe. *v.* 26. *How is it then (Brethren) that when you come together, every one of you hath a Pſalm, hath a Doctrine, hath a Tongue, hath a Revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done to Edifying.* *v.* 27. *If any man ſpeak in an unknown tongue let it be by two, or at moſt by three, and that by courſe, and let one interpret.* *v.* 28. *But if there be no interpreter let him keep ſilence in the church: and let him ſpeak to himſelf and to God.* *v.* 33. *For God is not the Author of confuſion, but of peace in all the churches of the ſaints.*

Here is indeed a direction given by an infallible Apoſtle for the exerciſe of thoſe extraordinary gifts; A direction whoſe end was *Edification*, and this by the avoiding of *Confuſion* and a reaſon given: *For God is not the author of Confuſion*, The Confuſion is plainly by the Apoſtle ſignified.

1 *That*

1 *That ſeveral perſons who had theſe extraordinary gifts, would at the ſame time be communicating to their Brethren their Pſalms, their Doctrines, their Revelations, their Interpretations, Their gift in languages.* 2 *That thoſe who could ſpeak with diverſe tongues never regarded to have what they ſaid interpreted,* from whence nothing could proceed for *Edification,* while many underſtood nothing of what was ſaid: and manifeſt *Confuſion,* ſeveral perſons gabling *diverſe things, at the ſame time.* To the avoiding of which the Apoſtle directeth.

1 *That they ſhould not ſpeak together, but ſucceſſively, & by courſe.*

2 To avoid undue lengths, *That not above Two, or Three at moſt ſhould ſpeak at the ſame time.*

3 *That if any ſhould ſpeak an unknown language, ſome one ſhould interpret,* That what was ſpoken might be underſtood by all. This is all the Apoſtle ſaith. Is there any *Noncon.* that will not moſt freely grant all this? 1 *That Two or Three miniſters ſhould not pray and preach together* to the ſame auditory, and if any will be ſo diſorderly the ſuperior ought to reſtrain them, that there be no *Confuſion.* 2 *That if miniſters will protract their diſcourſes to unreaſonable lengths,* they may be reſtrained. 3 That if any be ſo vain, as becauſe he can ſpeak *Latine, French, Dutch, or any other language, not generally known to his people, he will pray, & preach in ſuch language: The ſuperiors ſhall forbid it, & that by authority of this ſcripture.*

But ſurely, our *Reverend Brother* is ſo much of a ſcholar

ſcholar & a Divine as to conclude, That becauſe ſuperiors may thus far reſtrain the notorious, & evident abuſe of gifts; therefore they may as they pleaſe limit the uſe of them; yea, forbid the uſe of them ordinarily in the performance of thoſe Acts to which they relate.

If indeed he could have proved, That the Apoſtle had ſent them a *Manuſcript* of his own (and we know he had *parchments)* of *Propheſies*, *Doctrines*, *Pſalms*, *Revelations*, and commanded them that when they *Propheſied*, *taught*, *ſang*, they ſhould *ordinarily uſe them*, *& none but them.* This had come nearer the buſineſs, (yet not home to it, till the ſame Infallibility could be aſſerted for preſent ſuperiors, as for the bleſſed Apoſtle) as well as the ſame conſtitution of God for them to direct in all matters of worship, and Eccleſiaſtical order; which none can deny the Apoſtles to have been poſſeſſed of: Yet the Apoſtle knew the mind of his maſter too well, to ſend them *books* to *pray* & *preach by*, but onely directeth them to ſuch an uſe of thoſe Gifts with which God had bleſſed them, as might be without what all men would cry out off as *confuſed*, *clamorous*, *diſorderly*, and *unreaſonable:* becauſe the generality of hearers not underſtanding them, could not poſſibly get any good or advantage from them. Our *Reverend Brothers* Argument muſt lie thus.

If the *Apoſtle Paul might in the Church of Corinth direct, that none might ſpeak* in an *Unknown tongue*, nor *Two or Three gabble together*, *nor any* (though he were able) *miniſter in a language which the people under-*

underſtood not; and the Corinthians were bound to obey: Then the Church or Churches of the preſent age, may command all their miniſters when they pray, for three parts of four of their time ſo ſpent, to ſpend it in praying (omitting any uſe of their own gifts) by reading, or reciting the preſcribed forms of prayers which they ſhall ſend them: And thoſe miniſters are bound to do accordingly.

We leave our Reverend Brother upon ſecond thoughts to judge of the validity of this conſequence, and do believe that it will not juſtify it ſelf to his own private thoughts: we cannot (we profeſs) reconcile it to any degree of Reaſon. Here is a manifeſt arguing from *things of one kind, to things of another*, and that quite different. It being one thing, to reſtrain the abuſe of gifts, another thing to reſtrain the uſe and that not as to order of time, and ſo as to make the uſe of them (ſtill eſtabliſhed even in every individual act) intelligible, and of uſe to the church: but ſo as it ſhall be onely denied or Suppreſſed, as to the far greater Number of thoſe individual acts wherein they ſhould be uſed. The upſhot therefore of this argument is, Thoſe of our Brethren who will anſwer this argument, muſt bring us ſome *Medium* which will conclude.

„ *That it is lawful for miniſters of the goſpel, having* „ *a ſpiritual gift given them of God; as a proper mean* „ *to help them in the performance of their Miniſterial* „ *acts in ſolemn, publick prayer: yet at the command* „ *of ſuperiors, ordinarily to perform thoſe acts, omit-* „ *ting the uſe of ſuch means, and uſing the preſcribed* „ *forms*

„*forms of others.* Which we can by no means „agree to.

1 Becauſe *of the force of the ſcriptures before mentioned.*

2 Becauſe, *we think we ſhould allow men wiſer then God*, if we ſhould in practice prefer *a mean* of mere human invention, before one that is *Divine*; and therefore *more proper*, and (we are ſure) more natural.

§. 8 We meet with no more (pretended) direct anſwers to our argument. We are aware of the indeavours of ſome, to reduce it to abſurdity; with what ſucceſs, we ſhall very ſhortly examine. They tell us that admitting this Principle,

1 *All thoſe Eminent Divines would be condemned, who have uſed or do before their Sermons uſe a form of their own compoſure*, The vanity of this will appear from our ſtating the Queſtion.

2 *He who preacheth muſt preach ex tempore.* This is as idle as the other, we argue not for praying *ex tempore*; but onely in the uſe of our own gifts, which certainly excludes not previous meditation; men may uſe what of that they pleaſe.

3 *We muſt not uſe the Lords prayer.* Let any one read our queſtion, & ſee if it concludes againſt any ſuch thing.

4 *The miniſters alſo muſt make hymns*, and people muſt not ſing by forms. As if we had not ſcriptural forms to which we are tied in ſinging, compoſed by men divinely inſpired. We think *Apochryphal Anthems* to be ſang in publick worship no more lawful, then

then *Liturgical forms* of Prayer. Nor can it be proved, that *Hymn-making*, or *singing* is an *ordinary ministerial act*: Nor that God hath to any promised the gift of Psalm, or Hymn-making; but it is certain he hath promised the *Spirit of prayer*, *Zech.* 12. 10. *Rom.* 8. 26.

5 Nor do they speak any thing more to the purpose, who tell us that according to our Principle, *None must join with others in prayer, for the speakers prayer is a form to him.* The Question is not about him who *barely prayeth*, who hath nothing to do but to exercise his grace: *but about him who is in prayer to minister unto others.*

6 We have met with some, who have indeavored to encumber this argument with another absurdity, telling us that according to this Principle, *Every minister who is able to interpret the Hebrew of the old Testament, & the Greek in the new, is bound to read the scripture according to his own interpretation: and not the translation received in the Church where he ministreth.* And indeed of any thing we ever heard objected, this cometh neareſt an argument to bring our Principle to an absurdity; But yet we think it is not sufficient: For, not to dispute, *whether Publick Reading of the scriptures* be (though a good work and fit to be used in the Congregation, as Moses was read in the Synagogue) strictly a *ministerial act*; we never read Christ saying to his Ministers, *Go & read*: so, as for ought we know, The scriptures may in *the publick Congregation be read by inferiour officers* (as is very ordinary, in other Reformed Churches) we

say, not to insist upon this (which yet were a foundation not to be shaken) we take that Principle which (if we remember right) we have some where read in *Mr. Capel*, to be a true Principle, *That God never yet had a church in any place of the world, but he at the first planting of it, and so after (as there was occasion) stirred up the Rulers, to employ some in making a true version of the scripture; which persons so employed, God hath, upon experience, been found constantly so to assist, That they have not erred or mistaken in any point of Doctrine necessarily to be known & believed: and that it is his will, that particular ministers, & members in such churches in their ordinary use, & reading of the scriptures, should use such version, or the version of some other church, which they may find more exact & perfect.* This is so fully proved by experience, & the frequent use which both Christ & his Apostles made of the *Septuagint version* (though as full of mistakes as any other, if compared with the *Hebrew*) that nothing is to be said against it, nor need any more be said in answer to this objection. The sum of what is said is this, That to interpret the body of scripture to be read to people is no private ministerial act, or gift, nor is any single minister fit to be trusted with it, nor to enter a dissent to the ordinary version used either in the church of which he is a member, or some other orthodox church as to a particular text, but with great modesty and upon weighty grounds.

§. 9 We think enough said to justify our argument against all answers we have met with; and those, who are so ready upon all occasions to send

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us for satisfaction to *Mr. Hooker* & *Dr. Sanderson*, should do well to tell us in what *Page* of either of their works this argument is answered: for we can in neither of them find an answer to it. Our adversaries may also see, that we do not neglect to inquire into all their writings for satisfaction: Though it be our misfortune to find them rarely speaking to the true question, but first making to themselves a man of straw, then pelting him with arguments, and immoral language.

§. 10 Hence also appears to our weaker Brethren an obvious reason, why some of us can at a pinch *hear other ministers pray in the use of such prescribed forms*; *though our selves cannot use them*: When we join in prayers with others, we have nothing to do, (provided the petitions we hear be according to the will of God) but to say, *Amen*, exercising our faith, *&c.* But if we be our selves to *Minister in prayer*, either we are mistaken, (which we must first be convinced of) or besides the exercise of Grace, God requireth also, we should use *Our Gifts* being the *mean* he hath given us for those acts: Whether he who ministreth acquitteth himself to God or no? *Viderit ipse*, it is nothing to us let him look to that. Nor can there be any thing of scruple in the hearing of ministers praying by the forms of others (provided the matter) of them be good, and according to the will of God: Unless some should scruple it, *as encouraging a minister in that which they judge sinful.* But why may not we think, That he who doth use them, doth it in an humble distrust of his own abilities, & thinks at

least that he doth *agere optimum*, do his best? Why must we think our selves infallible? We dare not judge those who we think have the gift of prayer, but think not fit to use it in their ordinary service; because their superiors command the omission of it: but as we do not judge them, so we dare not practice after their copy. Whether it be sin in them we freely leave to Gods determination, we are sure it would be *sin to us*. *As we believe, so we speak, so we must act*: but shall freely listen to what any of our Brethren can say to the taking away of the appearing *Probability*, both of this argument, or any other we shall bring. In the mean time we would not be crowed over, as such dunces who have nothing to say: but are *hardned with Prejudice, blinded with passion, biassed by false Principles*, &c. See *Dr. Asheton's* Ded. Ep. Nor as *meerly peevish & Grubstreet Divines*, &c. which with abundance more of such brutish stuf another useth. Till these confident men have let the world know, That they have given a sufficient answer like scholars to what we say, and that they are good at something else besides reviling, we are not careful to answer them.

Chap. III.

The second argument. The terms opened. What is meant by Attention, Intention, & Fervency? Both propositions proved. Mr. Freemans answer considered. What Mr. Falconer hath said, in answer to this argument, proved insufficient. The Judgment of the

Leyden

Leyden Professors, *and the* Walachrian classis *not duely opposed to this Argument. Mr. Falconers three reasons why forms should not hinder devotion answered.*

§. 1

WE proceed to a second Argument which we thus state,

To use such a mode, in the ordinary performance of our duty in solemn publick prayer, as either from the necessary workings of human nature: or otherwise upon experience we find, either hindring the Attention of our own, or others thoughts to the duty: or the Intention and Fervency of our own, or others Spirits in the performance of the duty, when we can so perform it as neither of them will be to that degree hindred, is Unlawful:

But for him who hath the Gift of prayer, ordinarily to perform his ministerial Acts in publick solemn prayer: is for him to use such a mode in those Acts of worship as either from the Natural workings of human nature, or from some other cause scarce avoidable is upon experience found to hinder his own Attention and also the Attention of others thoughts to the duty, and the Intention & Fervency of his own, & others spirits in the duty, when in the mean time he hath a natural ability so to perform it as neither of them will (at least to that degree) be hindred; Ergo:

This we conceive to be what by *Mr. Falconer* is represented as a second *Objection* under the terms, *That it is disadvantageous to devotion.* We shall with what candor becomes us towards a person of *Mr. Fal-*

owers worth & candor, consider both what he saith in answer; And also *ex abundanti*, what we find to have been said (to less purpose) by any others; And examine, whether what he or they have said, amounteth to a strict answer, which may free us from the *probability* of truth which appears in this argument.

§. 2 For the *Proposition* it is so evident from Scripture, being indeed a branch of the commandment which our saviour calls, The first and great commandment, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, & all thy strength:* And inforced by so many Scriptures directly requiring *Attention of thoughts*, and *Fervency of Spirit* in all the service of God, (especially in prayer) That we never met with any bold enough to deny it: For he who denieth it must affirm, That though God hath commanded us to love him with all our *heart, soul, & strength:* yet, if man commands us *not to do it, it is lawful*, though God hath commanded us to serve him with the *Attention of our thoughts*; & with *Fervency of Spirit*; and commanding us to pursue this end, hath also enjoined us to use the means most proper for it: yet, If our superiour commands us to use such means as are less proper, we may lawfully do it. Which to us appears very strange assertions, neither becoming *Divines*, nor *good Christians*, nor indeed *rational men*: For supposing that there is a God, The light of nature is enough to shew us, He must be served *with all our hearts*, with the *highest attention of thoughts*, & *intention*, & *fervency of Spirit*.

§. 3 So as all the Question can be, is about the

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Minor propoſition, Whether he that performs his Miniſterial act in Solemn Prayer by the preſcribed forms of others, doth not uſe a meanleſs accommodate to his own & others Attention of thoughts, and Intention & Fervency of Spirit: then he who deales with God immediately, uſing his tongue to expreſs conceptions firſt formed in his own heart? To us it is next to a demonſtration that he doth, and that upon that account it is unlawful: to which purpoſe we deſire, That theſe things may be wiſtly conſidred by any deliberate perſon.

§. 4 *Whether it be poſſible for any perſon to read any diſcourſe, be it a Prayer, a ſermon, an Oration (what it will) with that degree of Attention of thoughts, as he muſt pronounce the ſame diſcourſe with by heart: if he ſo pronounceth it as but to ſpeak ſenſe?* We do think none will find, or ſay it is. The thoughts of man are wild things, & impatient of a long intenſe abode upon any object (we ſpeak of the generality of men) but never ſo buſy to break priſon, & wander, as when we are employed in the holy ſervices of God, And that partly in regard, That *God* is an inſenſible metaphyſical object: Partly, Becauſe of that natural averſion from communion with God, which (ſince the fall) hath been the univerſal diſeaſe of human nature. So that conſidering how human nature is ſtated ſince the fall, we believe it a thing impoſſible. We know it will be ſaid (and that truly) that this argument concludeth not againſt the miniſters uſe of forms prescribed by others, *if he reciteth them by heart*; but onely againſt his performing his miniſte-

rial acts in prayer by reading such forms. We confess it, and say, That if but this post be gained, much is done. God would doubtless be served with much less distraction, and divagation of thoughts, then he ordinarily is on the part even of him that ministreth; which was the Reason, why the *Reverend* and very learned Author of *Altare Damascenum* allowing *the use of forms at first*, to help those who have not attained the gift of prayer, in any proportion fit for ministers; would yet have them enjoined to recite them by heart.

§. 5 Secondly, *Whether any thing can in reason be imagined more conducive to fix the thoughts upon the duty, & God in the duty? Then when a minister hath attained, to such a familiarity with the phrase of Scripture, and such a knowledge in the body of Divinity, That although he will always need a premeditation of the Greatness, & Majesty of God; his own vileness, & nothingness; and the weightiness of the duty: yet, he needeth not compose his form syllabically before he comes; but can trust his Affections to thrust out words*, while his eyes may be shut & sent to his heart, (as our Divine Poet speaks) Or open, and lifted up to heaven and fixed towards the place, where his heavenly father is; and while his heart is *enditing a good matter*: And his tongue employed as the *pen of a ready writer*. We think this is so evidently more conducive to the fixation of a mans thoughts, and the commanding their attention to the duty, That it is impossible for any who will not deny the workings of a reasonable soul, to be able without a self condemnation to deny it.

§. 6 A

§. 6 A third thing which we would have considered is, *Whether considering the infirmity of all our natures, any such attention is to be expected, or hoped for from people to forms of prayer which they hear a thousand times over, as to conceived prayer?* We lay no great stress upon it, but think it at least an ingenious observation, That God himself when he would Stir up his peoples attentions, & affections to what he was doing, tells them, He would do *a new thing*. We are sure common experience teacheth us, That none gives that attention to a discourse or story, he hath heard an hundred times over, that he giveth to a new discourse or story, (excepting onely to the holy scriptures, for which God hath secured an abiding reverence in all pious souls) And this is owned by *Mr. Falconer*, giving it in his Epistle as a Reason, why after so many learned men he wrote upon this subject: Because *the humour of this age* (he might have said all ages) *is more apt to seek for new books then read old ones.* Whether this be the infirmity of our natures, and if our infirmity, whether our sinful infirmity or no, are not much material to our present question? Let it be the one, or the other, if not to be shaken off, and if by a *mean* which Gods word forbids not, it may in any measure be helped; certainly considering how necessary it is to the duty, that *mean* ought not to be neglected in obedience to any creature.

§. 7 But *Attention of thoughts* is not all our duty in prayer, *Intention of spirit*, *and fervency of Affections* is also a prime requisite to an acceptable performance

of it. *Rom.* 12. 11. *Jam.* 5. 16. Yea, It is so necessary as without it, the soul plainly mocketh God, and deceiveth it self: now we cannot apprehend, That either the person ministring, should have the same *intention* & *fervency* in reading the prescribed forms of others, as when his prayer is first formed in his own heart, or that the people should be so advantaged in their fervor and intention.

§. 8 As to him that ministreth. *There is a great deal of difference betwixt words following the Affections, and Affections following words.* This is an old Argument made use of by the learned Author of *Altare Damescenum in conceived prayer.* The heart is first inflamed and made apprehensive, of the *Greatness* & Majesty of God; the vileness, & sinfulness of its self, *&c.* And upon the working of these affections, words are formed in the mind, and then thrust out at the lips. *In the use of the prescribed forms of others, words are first*, which indeed uttered may excite some affection, or in the uttering be attended by some affection: but there is a great deal of difference, betwixt the *workings of the affections* thus commanded, and prest into the service; or thus caused, and following words uttered: and *the workings of affections first inflamed*, & then commanding our words. It is true, That if a man be to use prescribed forms, there may be some general previous *preparation of the Affections*: but he who will deal truly with his own soul, will find it hard to keep them up and warm so long, as until he cometh to his work. Nor do we think it possible that the words of another

should ſo well fit our hearts, and be ſo expreſſive of raiſed Affections as our own. An orator (let him be as much an Artiſt as he can) will find it no eaſy thing to give one of *Tullies* Orations (recited by him) ſuch an *accent*, as he can eaſily give one whom he himſelf hath formed. There is ſomething (not ſo eaſy to be expreſſed what) in our own words to expreſs the Affections of our hearts, and conducive to keep up their warmth & vigour; which is not in the words of another, which are to the ſoul (as *Sauls* armour to *David*) we hardly think it poſſible (we are ſure not ordinary) for a miniſter to preach a ſermon of anothers with that life and vigour, with which he can do one formed by himſelf.

§. 9 If the miniſter readeth his forms, there is a manifeſt impoſſibility of the like degree of intention: For it is the ſoul, which looking through the eye, directeth it ſo as a man readeth true; & ſo is plainly diverted from its immediate contemplation of, & fixation upon God.

§. 10 But here the author of *The Reaſonableneſs of Divine ſervice* comes acroſs us, & tells us for a firſt anſwer to this Argument.

P. 30. *He that prays without book, eſpecially with* „ *Vocal prayer, muſt needs look upon the like Prints,* „ *and ſtamps made in the brain, (or whatſoever* „ *things the ſpecies are) without which a man can neither* „ *think nor ſpeak, they muſt be accounted objects; And* „ *the legible ſigns in the book do ſerve to bring the* „ *inward phantaſms more readily in actual view, and* „ *to marſhal them with leſs labour, diverſion, or diſ-* „ *turbance.*

He saith well (or what ever things the species are) It is indeed a notion vulgarly received, *That all understanding is by some sensible, or intelligible species*, or prints of things in the brain: But it is very like the author knows that Philosophers have found it hard to determin, what those *effluvia* are? Where they lodge? How the soul worketh in the use of them? and in these things the best Philosopher is but a *Lover of wisdom*, & cannot say *it shall dy with him.* Suppose a child born *blind* & *deaf*, yet it may understand something, but by what species we cannot tell. To say it is by some *connate species* contradicteth Philosophy; Acquired it can have none; If we say, it is by *Infused species*, we make it an early *Enthusiast*, and we have better ground by far to say, That he who prayeth hath such, because the Spirit is promised in the case, *Rom.* 8. 26. *Because we know not what to pray for.*

§. 11 But supposing what he saith, That he who prayeth *Vocally* by words first conceived in his own heart, must first attend to the prints in his brain of the words which he is about to utter; yet, Surely the Author of this answer might have considred. 1 That he who *readeth forms* must first attend to the prints in his book, and then to the prints which are made by the *Effluvia* from the book in his brain, before he can speak: so as here is a double act, whereas the other is but single. 2 Again, The first attention to the prints in our brains, is necessary according to the order of Nature, our author himself tells us, *without them we can neither speak nor think.* 3 Farther, That Attention of the soul with-

within it self, is an *immanent act*; but the viewing of a book, and the prints there, and its excercising it self in the composition of those syllables and words is not so; not terminated within the soul, not naturally necessary to the action, nor necessary from any immediate divine precept: But a perfect unnecessary diversion, and a most certain hindrance of the minds intension: because it is impossible that any created being should in the same action duly intend two objects. We remember the schoolmen first supposing what is false, *That when Christ in his last Supper gave his body to his disciples, he did also offer it up as a Sacrifice to God*; start a question, *How he could do both these at the same time with a due intension?* They say he could, *Quia intentionem habuit perfectissimam*, Because he had a most perfect intension, a Priviledge we hope our Brethren will not challenge for every clergy man. But this is enough to have said for the *Ministers intention.*

§. 12 *The Intension of the people is matter of far more subtil disquisition.* The very learned Author of the book called, *Altare Damascenum*, *p.* 1614 hath this expression,

„*Et puto ego auditores*, &c. And I think (saith „he) that the people do feel another kind of flame, „[or Affection] when the minister goeth before „them, in words determined from his affection „going before; then from affections following after „words, especially when the hearers are a little wonted to the prescribed forms.

We do think the same thing, and believe it a notion

notion which will justify it self to the experience of every pious, deliberate Soul. Possibly it is not so easy to assign the true reason of this difference, whether it be some secret sympathy of pious souls? 2 Or some more special assistance of God to, and influence upon his ministers doing their duty, suggesting to them what to speak best suted to their peoples souls? Or whether we should lay it upon peoples infirmity, indisposing them to bend their minds so to forms said over & over? Which if it be, it is such as human nature is not like to quit it self off. Nor in our case is it at all necessary to assign the reason, The question being onely about the, *An sit?* Whether it be so or no? And we cannot but observe that the Author of the *Reasonableness* of Divine service, *p.* 31. doth after some words confess, *That he who himself is in speaking affected, is most like to affect others, if he be as clear, as rational, and persuasive.* The *Noncon.* will easily agree, that he is not so likely, if his discourse be *irrational, confused, dark & flat.*

§. 13 But the same Author offers at a second answer, he had granted both the *Major* & *Minor* proposition: The Major, *p.* 22 in these words, *Every man is bound to pray with the highest intention of mind and fervency of Spirit, which can be obtained by lawful means*, we dare say no *Noncon.* will ask him more: *The minor* he grants again & again, Sect 7. *p.* 25, 26, 27. What will he deny then? nothing remains but the Conclusion: *He would fix this intention of mind in conceived, more then in prescribed forms of prayer; upon some as he thinks false bottoms.* He instanceth in 8.

1 *Pre-*

1 *Prejudice against the use of forms.* 2 *Novelty of words and phrases.* 3 *The exercise of gifts with which we are more delighted then the exercise of grace.* 4 *The Natural delight men have in their own, more then in others Inventions.* 5 *The scope men have conceived in Prayers for glory & ostentation.* 6 *The tumults of bodily Spirits.* 7 *The bending their minds in Invention.* 8 *The straining their bodies by drawing out words.*

Now to this we answer, First,

§. 14 Either these must be the onely causes of greater Intension & fervency of Spirit in *conceived*, then in *prescribed forms* of *prayers*; or else this is nothing to the purpose, and onely concerneth those to whom these alone are the causes of such greater fervor & intention: But we have before shewed, these are not the onely causes; but because the soul is not so much diverted, &c. as it must be in the use of forms.

§. 15 But *Secondly*, When we have reminded our *Reader* what we understand by *fervor* and *intention of soul*, we will consider the eight particulars, which the Author confesseth contributary to it. By the souls *Attention* we mean, *Its immediate contemplation of God, without diversions to other objects.* A thing so necessary, that the soul which doth not its utmost toward it, doth but mock God, and cannot be serious with him. A Schoolmaster (if he can discern it) will not indure the Omission of it, in a boys saying his lesson to him. It is (in short) for the soul *hoc agere*, indeed to do what it pretends to do. *My heart is fixed* (ô God! saith David) *my*

heart

heart is fixed. By *Intention*, *& Fervor of Spirit* we understand, That holy zeal & heat which the soul should be in, in all religious acts required of all Gods servants. *Rom.* 12. 11. Commended in *Apollos*, Acts. 18. 25. But especially in *Prayer* called, *crying unto God*, *A pouring out of our souls*, *& hearts before him*, *A wrestling with him*, as in *Jacobs* case, *Hos.* 12. 4. This prayer is that which *St. James* calls, ὁσία δέησις, *Jam.* 5. 16. Thus *Epaphras laboured in prayer fervently*, *Col.* 4. 12. We mean nothing less by it, then the *heat of the Brain*, or *the body* about which this Author trifleth at a strange rate: we mean the heat of the Inward man, which lies in the intense motions of the affection, of Sorrow in confessing sin, Desires in putting up petitions, Joy in thanksgivings, *&c.* The eagerness of the soul to, and in its work; That which David calls, *The souls pressing after God*, Jacob, *A not letting God go*, The Prophet, *A not being quiet*, *not holding our peace*, *&c.* The duty required in the first commandment (so far as concerneth prayer) serving God *with all our heart*, *all our soul*, *all our strength*: This being now every Ministers, yea, every private Christians duty: We say, Whatsoever means nature it self, reason, or our particular experience, or Gods word dictateth as proper in order to it; we must not, we can not in Obedience to mans command barely omit: And whatsoever either Gods word, or nature it self, or reason, or our Experience sheweth us will in any degree hinder this: it must be sinful, let who will require it; as being contrary to our Duty expressly

requir-

required in the First and Great commandment. And in many particular Scriptures referrable unto that.

§. 16 This Assertion standeth upon that foundation confessed by all Divines, *That the precept requiring the end, doth also include the means*; which surely must not be interpreted with an exception, viz. *Except superiours forbid the use of such means, or commands the use of the contrary*, &c. The precept legitimateth the means, if another particular divine precept hath not forbidden them, which it most certainly hath not.

§. 17 To come then close to our Author, 1 *If the Bending of the mind to think what to ask of God, & how to ask it.* 2 *If the exercise of gifts* at the same time when grace is to be exercised will conduce to the farther exercise of grace, and the not exercising them will in any degree hinder such exercise of grace. 3 *If the naturalness which is in man, rather to have his heart dilate & take fervent in the use of words first formed in his own heart*, do evince that this fervor doth most usually attend conceived Prayers. 4 *If the tumult of bodily Spirits* (as he calls it) *being first occasioned by the souls intension upon its work*, being raised once will help the fervor of the soul. nay, 5 *If the novelty of words, and phrases will do it* (and these are five of the eight things which himself confesseth may cause it) he must shew us they are *sinful causes*, or he hath granted all we contend for.

§. 18 If indeed (as that Author would uncharitably enough insinuate) the fervor of him who prayeth by *conceived prayer*, be meerly from prejudice

against

againſt forms, (though he ſhould have done well to have opened to us that cauſation, it is ſomething hard to conceive) or 2. *from a ſinful end of Vain glory* or foolish *oſtentation*, we do wholly condemn it: And for his *Eighth particular*, to us it wants an Interpreter, how *ſtraining the body by drawing out words ſhould cauſe fervency of ſoul.* So as what this Author pretendeth for an anſwer to our arguments, is but a bundle of impertinencies, having no cognation to an anſwer: And indeed he who had ſo juſtly before granted us both *Major* & *Minor*, had nothing to do; but (like a young *Logician*) to deny the Concluſion: or to amuſe us what he could with long, and impertinent diſcourſes. But let us further take notice of ſome other looſe paſſages in him, and ſee, whether any thing in them, or in his diſtinctions will ſave him harmleſs?

§. 19 He telleth us, „*This fervency muſt be obtained by the uſe of juſt means.* This is moſt true, and is not the uſe of a Gift given us by God for that end, a juſt mean? Is it not Natural, Rational, Scriptural? Such a mean as the ſervants of God have uſed? Is not this a juſt means think we? That which he would have us to believe is, That though it be our duty to pray with utmoſt fervor, & intention of Spirit; and though, in order to this Praying in the uſe of our own gifts, be more proper, & effectual: yet, if the Magiſtrate forbiddeth us the uſe of this Mean, it becometh an unlawful mean, and lawful for us to omit it, though we pray leſs fervently; therefore he tells us, *p.* 23.

„He

„ He that is by the Magistrate forbiddentō go to „ the next church, and therefore is necessitated to „ go to one more remote; must needs be more in„ disposed to prayer by his long journy (except „ some men of a temper by themselves) so that he „ shall not perform the duty with so high an inten„ tion of mind, or fervency of Spirit, as might pro„ bably be experienced in case he came to the church „ less wearied, and weatherbeaten: but yet, such „ a man may lawfully go to the farthest church, and „ pray there though these hinderances of intention, „ and fervency be consequent thereupon: because „ they are necessary, not voluntary; he wisheth „ the case were otherwise with him, but as the case „ standeth, if he should go to the next church, con„ trary to the Magistrates Prohibition, he should sin „ and Evil is not to be done that Good may come „ of it, especially when a greater evil might come „ of it, then the good aimed at, as in this Case.

§. 20 To all which we answer, God send his church in *England* better Divines then this Author. The case is this, The unlawfulness of ministers ordinary use of forms prescribed by others was indevoured to be proved, because it hindred *intention of mind, and fervency of Spirit.* Two things from reason, and by Gods special command, and determination necessary to every good prayer. He grants they are both necessary, whence it followeth, That he who omitteth any means given, or allowed him by God being natural, & rational which may help him in this must needs sin against God whose law commanding,

an End, always commandeth the uſe of all proper Means relating to it. He granteth this a Mean in it ſelf lawful, & he muſt acknowledge it proper and natural, yet he ſaith, *It is no ſin to omit it*, and ſo conſequently no ſin for one to ſerve God with a leſſer intention and fervency, when we have a natural power to ſerve him with a greater intention and fervency. And why none? Becauſe he ſaith, *It is neceſſary not voluntary.* Is it not voluntary? That is ſtrange, he did not put the caſe of the Magiſtrates forcing him to be draged to another place at ſuch a diſtance, where his Spirits muſt be exhauſted before he could come. How was it neceſſary then? Not *naturally*, not by *coaction*; It remaineth therefore that it muſt be neceſſary by ſome *divine determination.* In what leafe of Scripture ſhall we find it? He offers no texts but *what commands our obedience to Magiſtrates.* But is there any Scripture requireth an obedience to man in all things? Or muſt thoſe texts be limited to ſuch things, where we may obey them without diſobeying God. Thus this Author hath finely anſwered, by begging the queſtion which is, *Whether it be lawful to omit the uſe of a proper Mean given by God, for the performance of an Act in his worſhip according to his will*? The Apoſtles ſurely determined better. *Whether it be better to obey God or man judge you.* To his inſtance therefore the Anſwer is eaſy, If when we may with equal advantage to our ſouls go to a nearer church, and to one farther, but yet not at ſuch a diſtance as before we come there we ſhall be ſpent, our Spirits exhauſted, and we fitter

to

to sleep then to serve God, we think we ought to obey. But if they will command us to go to a place at such a distance, as we cannot reach in any time, or without such a wasting & tyring of our Spirits, as when we come there we shall be unfit for the service of God, we cannot obey. He trifleth to say, The thing is Inexpedient. It is unlawful, and he is a fallacious Sophister in Divinity who talkes of *chusing lesser evils of sin before greater.* There can be no necessity of sinning.

§. 21 In his *p.* 26. he seemeth to hint a time *when a less intention is more acceptable to God then a greater.* That time we would gladly know, for the Scripture saith nothing of it. He tells us, *when the Over-plus ariseth from the gift not from the Grace.* This is a strange nick of time, we always thought. The grace exercised in prayer, lay very much in Gods assistance of us, to keep our minds attent to our duty, and intent upon & fervent with God in our duty: so that to us it seems a strange piece of sense, That the overplus of *Attention*, *Intention*, and *Fervency* should proceed not from the Grace but from the gift: he goes on & tells us, *p.* 28.

„ Seeing the same things are prayed for in the *Li-*
„*tany* which can be the matter of the longest conci-
„ved prayer, though not in that variety, novelty,
„ and elegancy of Phrase; if the heat and the inten-
„ tion they speak of proceeded from the strength
„ of their desire to the things themselves, it would
„ be equal in both cases: but seeing it is not equal,
„ it must needs proceed from some other cause,

», and probably, from some of those assigned.

§. 22 He saith true, It must either proceed *from some different matter, or some other cause.* But, 1 we doubt whether what he sayes of the *Litany* be true, We think it far short of conteining the whole matter of *ordinary Confession, or Petitions, or thanksgivings*, See what the *Commissioners* at the Savy (in their papers since printed) have said to this. But suppose 2 The *matter* were ful, Can there be nothing else *frigidam suffundere*, to cool a Christians Spirit. What if there be a mixture of something else which a Christian cannot in his judgment allow? In the *Popish Missal* is much excellent matter, but we should think him but a luke-warm Protestant that could be fervent in Spirit *serving the Lord by it.* It is a great cooling to a Christians Spirit when his mind suggests doubts to him, Whether this be a way, mode, or method of worship which God will accept: because never directed by him. Here we instead of stirring up, & exercising our own gifts, and ministring them; borrow the gifts of others, and serve God with what costs us nothing but a little lip labour.

§. 23 To conclude for this Author we need no more then *Mr. Ireneus* against *Mr. Freeman.*

Every man is bound to pray with the highest intention of mind, and fervency of Spirit which he can by just means attain.

But he who (having an ability to express his own wants & wants of others to God in prayer in words first formed in his own heart) doth in the exercise of prayer use the forms of other men, doth not pray with the greatest inten-

intention of mind, & fervor of Spirit which can be obtained by juſt means; Ergo.

This is *Mr. Ireneus* argument, in his book called *The Reaſonableneſs of Divine ſervice*, Let *Mr. Freeman* anſwer it, we profeſs we cannot. The *Major* is made up of *Mr. Ireneus* his own words in the aforeſaid book. *p.* 22.

The *Minor* is not onely ſaid by *Mr. Ireneus* but proved too.

1 *If a man hath an antipathy to forms*, he ſaith, *It is no wonder that he can have but little intention, and fervor in the uſe of them.* So then he who hath ſuch an infirmity, cannot pray with the like intention or fervor by them. Now that ſuch an *Antipathy* is ſinful, he hath not proved. We ſuppoſe he doth not mean *Natural Antipathy*, That muſt be neceſſary and by his own conſequence not ſinful. If he means *Moral*, It is the ſame with *prejudice.* The goodneſs or badneſs of which depends upon the *efficient cauſe*; If any be therefore prejudiced againſt them, becauſe he cannot apprehend it a way of worship inſtituted by God, enjoned or practiſed by the *Apoſtles* or Apoſtolical church, Let him demonſtrate the ſinfulneſs of this *Prejudice*, we cannot.

2 *Men may be more intent, he ſaith, becauſe of novelty of phraſe*; Be it ſo, ſo that they be more *intent & fervent.* If the newneſs of phraſe will contribute towards it, for ought we know it is a *bleſſed Mean*: For ſurely it is *lawful* by Gods law, and if by doing what is not *in it ſelf* ſinful, we can advantage our ſelves in doing what is (by a divine

precept necessary, he must by his next tell us, why we may not do it.

3 He saith, *p.* 26. *Nature it self is apt to be more intent, and fervent in the exercise of a Gift then of a grace; and therefore where there is a place for the exercise of both, there may (probably) be more intention and fervor.* But say we the use of a gift is just no where forbidden by God; but we are commanded to *minister it, to stir it up, not to neglect it*, &c. It is *natural, rational, proper, most immediate*, Given by God on purpose for the Act to which it relates.

4 He saith, *Men are naturally more affected with their own inventions then with the inventions of others.* What need more, What Scripture, what reason makes the use of our own invention, and words unlawful: So that we think *Mr. Ireneus* hath fully proved that it is unlawful for him, who himself hath an ability fitly to express his own, and others wants in words unto God in prayer, ordinarily to use the forms of others: because he alloweth it our duty to serve God with the highest attention of thoughts, intention of mind, and fervor of Spirit which can be attained by lawful means: and he hath also given us four, or five reasons, why we cannot pray with the like attention, and intention by the prescribed forms of others as by words first formed in our own hearts. Thus hath *Mr. Ireneus* concluded against *Mr. Freeman* and left him nothing to do but to prove.

That if Superiors command men to serve God in prayer with less Attention, Intention & Fervency, it is lawful; and such prayers may be more acceptable to God, then such

ſuch as are put up, with greater Attention, Intention, and Fervor: which we ſhall believe, when he hath proved, That if the Iſraelites *Superiors* had commanded them, though they had *Males in their flocks*: yet to *offer females*, they might have lawfully done it, and it would have been either as, or more acceptable. The caſe is the very ſame.

§. 24 For what the ſame Author talks more of *the heat of the Body, and ſuch as is cauſed by obſtruction of breath, and drawling out of words.* It ſpeaks nothing but the Eructation of a profane heart more diſpoſed to flout at Religion, and to take any ſilly occaſion true, or falſe to reproach the Profeſſors of it; then to anſwer a good and ſolid Argument. And ſo we have done with *Mr. Freeman* believing we have not left him ſo much as a figeale to cover the nakedneſs of his anſwer.

§. 25 Let us now conſider what is ſaid againſt this Argument by *Mr. Falconer* the *Reverend Author* of *Libertas Eccleſiaſtica*, who *p.* 120, 121. thus ſpeaketh,

„ *It is further objected that Forms of Prayer, are* „ *diſadvantages to piety, and devotion and the Noncon.of-* „ *ten plead Experience as a Teſtimony, They are the cauſe* „ *of much deadneſs in mens Spirit, and the hinderance of* „ *the lively exercise of Religion. Hear on the other hand* „ *others by experience aſſert the advantage of ſet forms* „ *to promote Devotion, when attended without preju-* „ *dice, and with a Religious deſign of joining in Gods* „ *worship. To diſcern the truth in this difference; it* „ *may be uſeful to conſult the judgments of ſuch per-*

„ *sons, as are least partial in this case, and yet are able* „ *to make a true estimate of damage, and advantage,* „ *and then especially, to consider the evidence of Reason* „ *which may be produced.* To which we say,

§. 26 The *sensus piorum*, neither is, nor ever was judged by persons of our Reverend Brothers *sobriety and worth* an inconsiderable argument for the truth of a proposition (especially a practical proposition) not plainly determined in holy writ, nor can be so judged as to the *helps of true devotion:* they being like best to understand the best and truest means, who are most exercised in the Acts and constant pursuit of the end.

Indeed it is very reasonable in this case, That if the Proposition be not of that nature as the truth of it is variable, with reference to several Christians, that the Major part of pious souls, and able should be taken into judgment, And verily in this case were it possible that all religious souls having themselves the gift of prayer could be assembled, we think we might trust the question in issue to their umpirage; as to those (though pious) who have not attained to this gift, we cannot judge them competent judges of what they have no experience, but this being not to be hoped for.

§. 27 We say, we do not think but the experience of Christians may be different in the case: and some may find the use of their own gifts more advantageous; others may possibly find forms more advantageous: it depends much on the degree of the gift, which every one hath not in the same measure.

meaſure. But this we judge, That every one is bound in the duty of prayer to uſe that lawful mean, which he by experience finds moſt conducive to himſelf, to keep his thoughts attentive, his mind intent, his heart and affections fervent: So as one may be under an obligation not to uſe forms, another under an obligation for the preſent to uſe them. The obligation here ariſing from the nature of the thing, as it may be the beſt mean to one, and not to another; ſo he is bound, or not bound. *Let not therefore him that uſeth them, condemn him that uſeth them not; nor he that uſeth them not condemn him that uſeth them*; And we do not think matters of this nature fit matter for a ſuperiors command. One miniſter by experience finds it beſt, (as *Mr. Herbert* ſaith,) In time of prayer to ſeal up both his eyes, ſhutting up the doors at which a wandring ſoul uſeth to go out. Another finds it more expedient to keep his eyes open, and fixed towards heaven: both theſe aiming at the ſame end, and uſing that Mean, which in their own experience they find beſt to keep their thoughts attent, their hearts heavenly: ſhall the ſuperiors make a law in this Caſe, *That all miniſters ſhould pray with their Eyes ſhut*; or with their *Eyes open*; *or lifted up to heaven?* We do think ſuch a law would be unjuſt and he that obeyed it ſhould ſin if he found the part commanded what he could not do, but his heart more would wander and be leſs intent, and leſs fervent. Liberty in this caſe ought to be allowed, and the private Chriſtian cannot want it; becauſe he

hath no liberty to serve God with *a cold, wandring and distracted heart.*

§. 28 Our Author *p.* 121. goth on telling us, what the *Leyden Professors* declare in their Synopsis. *Disp.* p, 36. *Qu.* 33. And the *Walachrian classis* in *Apollonius* his considerations, *Controver. Anglic. cap.* 7. *Qu.* 2. We will give our Reader a full account of what is said in the case by either of them. The *Reverend Professors at Leyden, Disp.* 36. *Qu.* 33. do indeed say,

„*That they judge forms of Prayer not onely lawful,* „*but also very profitable, if they be pronounced with* „*due attention of mind.* Authority without reason signifieth little, let us therefore attend to their reasons, which they thus deliver us,

„ 1 *Because every Christian hath not the gift.* This doth not at all touch the case as stated by us.

„ 2 *Because in great meetings Attention is much helped* „*by usual forms,* whence (say they) God prescribed „a form of blessing. *Num.* 6.24. Christ used Davids „form, *Mat.* 27.46. And the disciples had a form „from Christ, *Lu.* 11.2. But yet,

Sect. 34. They confess it *it very profitable, yea,* „*almost necessary;* that all grown Christians, espe- „cially pastors, should stir up their gift of praying „publickly without previous forms, that as occa- „sion shall offer it self, they may pray and give „thanks as the holy men in Scripture did.

§. 29. The *Walachrian classis* begin with telling „us, That they do easily agree to the *Leyden Doctors,* „and *Dr. Ames* his determination in the place by them

„ them there quoted. *Cas.* l. 4. *cap.* 17. *& Qu.* 4. Now in that place that eminent *Casuist* thus speaketh, Having put the question in general about the *lawfulness of the use of forms of Prayer.* He thus answereth,

1 *It is manifest that it is lawful to use them,* Aliquando, „ *sometimes; from the practice of the saints, which* „ *the Scripture commendeth to us, and the forms of* „ *blessing there used.*

2 „ *It is profitable, & necessary,* Quibusdam, *for* „ *some to follow such forms, though they onely read* „ *them out of a book.*

1 „ Because some are, Adeo rudes, *So raw, & im-* „ *perfect that they cannot fitly express their minds in any* „ *measure.*

2 *There are others, who though they can do it well enough to serve themselves in private, yet, if they must pray with others, they want ability to do it, or a liberty* [we suppose he means a natural liberty of speech] *to exercise it.*

3 „ *There are some, for whom it is profitable, that* „ *they may rule their Meditations, and desires.*

3 „ *But none ought to acquiesce in it, but to labour* „ *for an ability that he may pray without this help for* „ *which he giveth us four reasons.*

1 *Because, while a prescribed form doth not follow* „ *our affections, but plainly lead them, he who so* „ *Prayeth doth that which is of the Nature of prayer* „ *less perfectly.* Observe that.

2 *Because in a prescribed form, all those particulars* „ *cannot be opened, which it may concern us to mention* „ *to God in prayer.*

3 „ *Be-*

3 „ *Becauſe God is wont in the time of Prayer, to* „*ſtir up in our hearts ſpecial Affections, which are* „*often hindred, and extinguiſhed by keeping to a form.*

4 „ *Becauſe by this means, a lazineſs, & fear &* „*ſluggiſhneſs in the performance of the duty creepeth* „*upon us, ſo as the form is onely cuſtomarily, & for-* „*mally recited.* Thus far that incomparable Caluiſt *Dr. Ames*, with whom as with the *Leyden* Profeſſors, *Apollonius* and the reſt of the *Walachrian Divines* in the firſt place declare themſelves fully to conſent. The ſum of what they ſay is; *That praying by forms is a leſs perfect way of praying, and therefore not to be reſted in, but all ought to labour for an ability to pray without this help:* And ſurely when they have attained it, then they ought to uſe it. But they ſay, *Forms of prayer* are not things in themſelves *unlawful*, But may be uſed *Aliquando, & ab aliquibus*, ſometimes, and by *ſome perſons*, which they expound, when men are ſo *raw* that they have not the gift; or not in *a meaſure fit for publick uſe*; or have not a *liberty* or *freedom* of ſpeech. We freely grant all this, but it toucheth not our queſtion.

§. 30 But the *Walachrians* go on and reject. 1 *All ſuch forms as are in their matter vicious, having any thing illegitimum, impertinens, indecorum. Unlawful, impertinent*, or *indecent*: And upon this account they in expreſs terms declare againſt *the forms in our late Common prayerbook*. Whether juſtly or no we determine not: but ſurely their authority ought not to have been brought by our Reverend Brother to countenance the uſe of thoſe forms.

2 They

2 They *reject all those forms which by a Tyranny, or violent commands are imposed upon mens consciences, as parts of worship and absolutely necessary*, &c. 3 Finally. They state the Question onely about such a Prescription.

Quâ ad ordinem, & decorum cultus divini Ecclesiasticâ authoritate commendantur, ut utiles & conducentes iis, vel facultate idoneâ, vel eam exercendi libertate destituuntur, &c. That is,

„ By which they are by Ecclesiastical authority „ commended as profitable, and conducive to „ them, who either want the Gift of Prayer or a li- „ berty to use it, to express themselves decently; „ and that by them as by certain means they might „ be ruled, in their meditations, desires, words, „ and actions; and the attention of the hearers, espe- „ cially in great meetings of churches may be helped, „ and directed; and an uniformity in the exercises of „ publick worship may in all churches be observed, „ for avoiding of scandals, and for the greater edi- „ fication of churches. We (say they) do think „ such forms, so used both publickly, & privatly, „ lawful, and profitable: so that they be read with „ due attention, reverence, faith, and Spiritual affection „ towards God, and zeal; and that not onely in a „ case of necessity, when a minister wants ability to „ express himself in prayer, or in other parts of Di- „ vine worship, decently; but when the Attention „ of the hearers is to be directed, and helped, and an „ Uniformity in the exercises of Gods worship is to „ be kept for an edification of the church of God: This they prove,

„ 1 From

„ 1 From the confessed lawfulness of singing by „a form.

„ 2. Because they conceive, that in the use of „ such forms all the essentials of Prayer may be found, „ and *observed.*

„ 3 From our Saviours Prescription of a form, in „ the Lords Prayer, and for the administring of the „ Sacraments.

Hence they say. „ They are approved almost in „ all Reformed churches.

§. 31 Our Question is not, *Whether forms of Prayer be lawful or no in themselves? we have granted them lawful and expedient to be used where the persons to minister have not the Gift of Prayer*, or *want a natural liberty to use it*? The Question is onely, *Whether it be lawful for them to whom God hath given the gift of prayer, and a natural freedom to use it? Whether they may ordinarily perform the Acts of prayer by the prescribed forms of others*? We think they may not. As a *Medium* to prove it, we have urged this. That it (at least in many) hinders *attention*, *intension*, and *fervency*. The great requisites of prayer. What now do these Reverend Brethren say to this, indeed they say, „ *Wee can say by experience,* „ *That a prayer holy and lawful as to the matter, may* „ *be read in a form, and offered up to God with an* „ *humble sense of our wants, with a desire and zeal,* „ *with holy affections, faith and a religious motion of* „ *the will towards God, as our occasions require.* This we think too, but it toucheth not the Question, which is not about the thing in any degree; but

about

about the *Magis & Minus*. If our Brethren had said: That a prayer may be read in a form with an *equal attention of thoughts, an equal intention and fervor of Spirit* as if uttered from the *immediate conceptions of our hearts*; they had then indeed offered their judgment, and experience directly contrary to our judgment, and experience: But let us hear their Arguments.

§. 32 They say, *The Scripture (though in a form) may be read with understanding, humility, reverence, zeal, a religious motion of the will towards God, faith in him, an application of the word read to our publick necessities; and therefore why may not forms of prayer be so read?* We answer, Because their is a vast difference between the pure words of God, (for which God both hath, and ever will secure a reverence in all religious souls) and forms composed by fallible men without any such direction from God. Let any Christian experience whether it be possible for him to read any book of mans making a thousand times, with that gust, and holy reverence, and with so little *tedium* as he may so read the books and chapters of holy Scripture. *Sic magnis componere parva solemus?* 2 Besides, The due workings of the soul upon God in reading his word, and in making known our requests unto him, are of a quite differing nature. To read the *Scriptures* fervently, and to *pour out our souls before God* in *reading Scripture*, or to *wrestle with God* in reading, are very uncouth phrases, such as we find not in our Bibles; But, *to pray fervently, to pour out souls in prayer, to wrestle with God*

God in prayer are scriptural, proper, usual phrases. Nor indeed is it possible in the case, to say any thing with sense, as to prayers which are *read*: For to say, A soul may be as intent upon God, when it must necessarily at the same time be diverted to look into a book as it might if the eyes were shut, or fixed: is to say, what every persons Reason will tell him is impossible.

§. 33 And to say, That the Affections may be equally intense, and that the prayer is as perfect when the Affections are made to follow the words; as when they do precede them, and are the causes of them; is what we believe the experience of all serious and considerate Christians will contradict, and what as we hear before, *Doctor Ames* doth deny, with whom the *Walachrians* profess fully to agree.

§. 34 Again, all the Authorities produced put in an [If] *if they be produced with due attention of mind* (say the Reverend Professors of *Leyden.*) *So they be read with attention* (say the *Walachrians.*) Due attention of the mind in this case, must be *equal attentions* to what may be given in *conceived Prayers*: for in the worship of God the *highest attention* is our unquestionable duty, and the mean proper to that, is most unquestionably to be used, and no creature can controle the use of it, and that less proper must be rejected: now in this sense we think it impossible, that any prayers should be read with *Due attention*: that is, with *Attention* equal to what may be had in praying by immediately *conceived Prayer.* And therefore we cannot but observe, That both the

Divi-

Divines of *Leyden*, and those also belonging to the *Walachrian classis*, speak not a word to justify the lawfulness, or utility *of reading Prayers*; *Ex libro pronuncientur*, say the *Walachrians*: which indeed, if it be the minister may (for ought we yet discern) do his work with *Equal Attention* of thoughts. For the attention of the hearers, we yet a little doubt it, and think that the prescribed forms of others, or constant use of the same form, though composed by the minister himself, will be found so far from being conducive to allure, or promove peoples attention, that (through the corruption to which we shall find all our own hearts subjected) they will rather be a Temptation to the contrary. Which makes us admire, that our *Reverend Brethren* should so much as mention it as a due *medium* in the case.

§. 35 It is manifest to us that both the *Professors* at *Leyden*, and the *Walachrians*, and *Dr. Ames* also speak rather to the question about the *lawfulness of the use of Forms* in general: Then about the lawfulness of ministers using them; *And that all ministers, and ordinarily as well such as have the gift of prayer in an eminent degree, as such as have not*; Therefore the first Reason which the Professors at *Leyden* give and *Dr. Ames* also is; *Because all Christians have not the gift*: and the *Walachrians* in their stating the question, Profess onely to speak to the case, *Where men want an ability, or a liberty to exercise it.* Neither can we understand them concerning forms *Universally imposed.* The word used by the *Walachrians* is, *Commendantur*, nor is there a word in any of them

to juſtify the lawful uſe of forms impoſed upon all miniſters. They have indeed ſome expreſſions which would make one think, They judged it *lawful* for ſome miniſters having the gift of prayer, in publick to uſe the preſcribed form of others commended to them ſometimes: For the ſecond Reaſon given by the Doctors of *Leyden* is, *Becauſe in great meetings, attention is much helped by uſual forms*; which the *Walachrians* alſo hint: But we cannot poſſibly fathom this, and think the contrary is demonſtrable.

§. 36 The *Walachrians* alſo urge ſome other reaſons *curſorily*. 1 *That he who prayeth by them may be ruled in his meditations, deſires, words, and actions.* 2 *That uniformity in all churches may be obſerved, Scandals avoided, The church edified.* Nothing in it ſelf ſinful can be done to *avoid ſcandal*, nor can poſſibly *tend to edification*: ſo as, Thoſe kind of arguments have no place, while we are diſputing the lawfulneſs of the thing. In ſhort, but one of theſe will concern all miniſters: For doubtleſs ſome are able without book to pray, ſo as to *give no ſcandal*, but to *edify the church*; and need no book to regulate their *meditations, deſires, words and actions*: if there be not, we are ſure theres none fit to compoſe forms to help them: So that all the buſineſs is, *That Uniformity may be obſerved. Uniformity* either reſpecteth the ordinary *matter* of Prayer; or, The *words and Syllables* uſed in prayer. For the firſt, ſurely theres no need of forms for that, that indeed is neceſſary (abating particular caſes) and this is that Uni-

Uniformity, which the *Scotish* and *English Divines* have so pleaded for, pursuant to an *Unity in Doctrine*. But 't is pretty to observe, How some late little *Authors* have laid hold upon this word *Uniformity* in the writings of *Presbyterians* and *Congregational Divines*, to make the world believe they were once patrons for that pitiful thing now called *Uniformity*, which lies in an oneness of *syllables*, *words* and *phrases*; A thing which never came into the heart of their God to command, nor of those his servants to commend or speak a word for: and certainly, If it were at all necessary would be fully as necessary in preaching; but they must have something to bespatter poor Nonconformists, *Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requiret?*

What other means of *Edification* there are (excepting the word, the Reading that, and the administration of the Sacraments) besides the gifts of Gods *ministers*, and *people*, we do not understand. But Authority apart from the Reasons they give, signifieth little in this case; and therefore our *Reverend Brother* doth rightly say, *That the surest way of Trial is to consider the Arguments used in the case*. In which we freely join issue with him.

§. 37 His first argument is, *Because God himself prescribed forms of prayer for the Jewish offerings, and for the Priests blessings; and our Saviour taught his disciples a form.* The Argument lies thus,

What God himself prescribed to be ordinarily used in his worship, and what Christ prescribed to be ordinarily used in worship, that can be no hindrance of piety and devotion:

But God himself, and Christ hath prescribed the forms that are by ministers now ordinarily to be used in prayer; Ergo.

The minor here is apparently false, If our Brother intended to argue thus, *If those forms which God appointed to be used, and which Christ appointed to be used, might be lawfully used: Then, Those which men appoint may be used.* We shall deny the Consequence.

The short is this, *That forms in themselves are not unlawful from their own nature.* This we freely grant, But we hope, Though God might be allowed a liberty to direct the images of *oxen* and *Cherubims* to be in his temple: and the people might lawfully worship before them (so be it they worshipped the true God) yet, *Aaron* might not of his own head, nor to humour the foolish Israelites, make a *golden calf*, though before it they worshipped *Jehovah*. If it be said, God had forbidden *images* in the Second commandment. We say, and under that *general* all other *mediums*, or means and *helps of worship, not of divine prescription*: yet, This argument is urged as a huge conclusive Argument; Both by the *Leyden* Professors, and the *Walachrians*, and by *Mr. Ball*: whenas indeed it concludeth nothing (though it could be proved, that God and Christ did prescribe forms to be ordinarily used in his worship) But that *forms of prayer*, are not things in themselves unlawful; as *murther*, *incest* and things against nature: But such things as God might legitimate, and make lawful by his special prescript; which, it is more then we know if any one hath denied.

For

For our parts we do believe, That *some* forms are lawful, In particular, Any *Scriptural forms* duly used, nay, That *forms made by men* are lawful for *Some persons*, i.e. For such as have not attained to the gift of prayer: and at *Some times*, i.e. When men have not their usual liberty of Spirit, or speech: Nor will this argument (supposing the *Minor* true) prove, That forms may be used without prejudice to *devotion*, *intention*, and *affections*; God secures that to his own institutions.

§. 38 But is the *Minor* unquestionable, viz. That God, and Christ prescribed *forms of blessing*, *and Prayer* to be syllabically used by ministers or people. *We deny* saith *Mr. Cotton*, *in his Advertisements upon the discourse of set forms of prayer*, *That God in his word* „ *hath set down any prescript form*, *in such a sense as in* „ *this Question is intended. The Priests*, Num. 6. 22, 23. „ *are indeed directed to a form of blessing*, *But that* „ *they used that*, *and no other form doth not appear*, „ *It is evident the Apostles used diverse other forms.* For the *Lords prayer*, we do not think our Saviour ever intended it to be used *Syllabically*: If he had, we do not think *Dr. Causabon* would have been put so hard to it, to make it up out of all the Apostolical writings; picking a sentence here, another there. Surely had they apprehended it left them *for a form* of words and syllables, we should have found some after record of the use of it. 2 Besides suppose he had so intended it, all that can be concluded is, *That Christ* may appoint a Liturgy for his church which surely none denies. 3 Whether supposing Christ did at

that time intend it for a form for his diſciples? Whether it were to laſt beyond his Reſurrection, and the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, is yet a farther Queſtion? It is well obſerved by the learned authour of *Bonaſius Vapulans*, That if he had, it is not likely that he would have left out his own name, and till that time himſelf ſaith, *His diſciples had ſo asked nothing. Joh.* 16.44. But were afterwards ſo enjoined to ask, *Joh.* 14. 13, 14. *Joh.* 16. 23. We refer the *Reader* to what *Mr. Cotton* hath farther ſaid to prove, That God himſelf never did preſcribe to his miniſters forms of words to be uſed, and no other in their publick miniſtrations. Now by this it is very eaſy to conſider, How far from any thing of an argument this is in the caſe.

1 *It will not prove it lawful to uſe any forms, but ſuch as God himſelf hath preſcribed, or ſuch as have been compoſed by men who were* [illegible] *and penmen of holy writ*: ſo as indeed the ſame argument would alſo prove a liberty for men to make us new Scriptures. All which will follow from the Argument is, That the *uſe of forms*, is not a thing of it ſelf like *Blaſphemy*; or ſome ſin ſo intrinſſecally evil, as God himſelf could in no caſe will it. But we hope, Though God might command *Abraham* to ſacrifice his Son, and had he done it, he might have been juſtified by that ſpecial precept: yet, without that it had been unlawful.

2 It will not prove, *That the ſame forms may or ought to be uſed ordinarily and conſtantly and that ſyllabically.*

3 Much leſs will it prove, *That the uſe of forms*

not

not particularly directed by God, or parts of holy writ, by reading them, doth not prejudice devotion, by hindring *Attention, Intention & Fervor.*

§. 39 Our Reverend Brothers Second argument is thus by him stated, *p.* 22 „ Because it is generally „ acknowledged, that the singing of Psalms of Prayer „ and Praise, may be advantageously performed by „ a set form of words: and the holy Scriptures, are „ not the less edifying, nor the less applicable to our „ selves, because they are conteined in set forms of „ words: and both in reading the Scriptures and in „ prayer our hearts ought to be moved towards God, „ though in something a different manner. The Ar- „ gument is this,

What, in singing of Psalms and Reading and Applying the Scriptures, doth not prejudice Devotion; That in Prayer doth not prejudice devotion:

But set forms of words doth not (as we confess) prejudice Devotion in singing Psalms of Prayer and Praise; nor in the reading and applying the Scriptures; Ergo.

The whole argument may be granted, For it concludeth nothing against us, Proceeding *ex ignoratione Elenchi*, upon a mistake of the Question, which is not about the lawfulness, or unlawfulness of the use of *set forms*; But of forms of *words set us by* men confessedly not *himself* not authorized, and directed by God to make such forms for general use by any special command. The Minor therefore should have been laid thus. „ But set forms of words in singing „ Psalms of Prayer and Praise, being no parts of holy „ writ, nor made by God, or penmen of holy writ,

„ do not hinder devotion. And if it be so formed we „ shall deny it, for it is most certainly false.

§. 40 *For reading the Scriptures, our Reverend Brother knoweth*, We can both shew him Precepts in Scripture for it, and also Promises made to it; if he can shew us but one precept *for reading forms of Prayer*, or one promise made to it, he will then have said something. These precepts, and promises are of that moment in the case, That they make Reading the Scriptures on Gods part, *A sacred institution*; on our part, *A necessary duty*: And by reason of the promise to be done *in faith*. Let our *Reverend Brother*, (if he can) say as much for *forms of Prayer*, made by men in these days.

§. 41 The same may be said of the *Psalms of prayer and praise* which we sing, They are such forms as God hath *canonized*; and to which in our singing we conceive our selves limited. Our Brother knows or may know, we are as much against *singing by others set forms*; as against *Praying*, ordinarily, by the set forms of others. Besides it poseth us to fancy how it is possible, that a whole Congregation should sing the same thing together, otherwise then by a set form: The peoples voices, that we know, are no where required in Prayer. And for the *meeter*, (which some make an objection) if it be not consonant to the Psalms in prose, we abhor it; if it be, The words are but the words of Scriptures limited by measures for the apparent order and decency of the action: singing being Gods institution, it is not to be doubted, but it may by a careful soul be per-

performed by such *Attention*, *Intention*, and *Holy workings* of the soul upon God, as he hath directed, and will accept in the action.

§. 42 But neither is the *Major* of our *Reverend Brothers* argument unquestionable, for he knows and confesseth, That the workings of the soul upon God, and the motions of the soul towards God in Prayer, are different from its workings and motions in Reading and Singing. In Reading, and Singing their should be, 1 Some contemplation and intuition of God. 2 Attention to what we are about. 3 An exercise of faith, believing what we read, and sing to be truth. But in prayer is required, A more immediate intuition and contemplation of God. 2 A striving and wrestling with God, for the obteining what we ask; therefore it is expressed, *By calling upon God, crying to him, pouring out our souls before him, a wrestling with him, a lifting up of our souls, it must be with strong crys & groans, Heb.*5.9. *Rom.* 8.26. Now that this cannot be done in reading of forms, prescribed by fallible men, or at least not so well done, as when the soul hath nothing to do, but meerly to look up to heaven, and thrust out its own words by which it expresseth its own conceptions, is to us next to a demonstration. Besides there is as we conceive another Act of faith to be exercised in *Prayer* then in Reading the word, &c. viz. A particular motion of the soul devolving it self upon God, and trusting in him for the granting of what we ask of him. But enough is said to shew, That neither is the *Major* of our *Reverend Brothers* Argument unquestionable.

§. 43 His third Argument to induce us to believe, that *such forms* do not hinder devotion, is in *p.* 123. laid thus,

„ Because all the ages of the church from the First „ centuries have used them as an advantage to Re- „ ligion; and it is not at all probable that such excel- „ lent, devout, and religious men as the Fourth „ and Fifth Centuries abounded with, should be so „ stupid, and dull spirited, as not any of them to „ discern between the helps and hindrances of devo- „ tion, in matters of most ordinary practice: where- „ fore though many mens minds may be most plea- „ sed, and delighted with a variey of expression, yet, „ There is no prejudice to piety from a set form „ farther, then this is caused by a prejudice against a „ set form, and by want of a Religious temper to join „ in it. The Argument is this,

What all ages of the Christian church; especially such devout and judicious men as lived in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries judged no hindrance to devotion, is no hindrance;

But all ages of the Christian church, more especially these devout and Religious men who lived in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries judged prescribed forms of prayer to be read, no hindrance to devotion; Ergo.

The *Major* is onely proved by, *It is not probable* (for certainly it was possible,) The *Minor* is taken for granted.

§. 44 In the first place we cannot but observe, The phrases our *Reverend Brother* useth, they used them

them, as an *advantage to Religion*. So they might, and yet they might be a disadvantage to *the particular devotion* of a great Number: We do believe that the *English Liturgies*, established in *Ed.* 6. & *Qu. Eliz.* time, was a great advantage to Religion in the nation in general, so great an ignorance having prevailed upon the nation in general in the times of Popery, as few were able to read, much less to compose prayers: But the tying of those to the use of it whom God had furnished with abilities that they needed it not, was notwithstanding this, A great disadvantage both to their particular devotion who had such gifts (and so our Brethren at *Francfort* judged in *Qu. Maries time*) and the general devotion of the whole church as to future times: both hindring ministers care to study the Scriptures, and to improve in spiritual ministerial gifts, and making an engine of perpetual discord from that time to this; and which hath been made use of for to deprive the church of God of the gifts and abilities of hundreds of able, godly, and painful ministers: while in the mean time, many have crept into the employment of it (being by *Liturgies* and *Homilies* now made so easy for them) of whom every one who hath any concern for Gods glory, or the churches repute, hath cause to blush and be ashamed.

§. 45 But Secondly, we would see it proved, That all the devout and judicious men, in the five first Centuries, That is for five hundred yeares after Christ, either judged, *Prescribed forms of prayer to be ordinarily used by all ministers in their publick ministrations*

strations advantageous to devotion; or that they so used them. We often hear of this, But when we call for proof, we can meet with nothing but *Gloria patri*, &c. & *Sursum corda*. Where we desire it may be observed, That a proof that in that time there were some *forms extant*, or used by some, in some particular churches, will not reach the case. *We are not against a form to be composed, proposed and left at liberty*, that those may use it who either have not, or durst not trust to their own gift. We farther know, That there then might be, and still may be some particular reasons in some particular churches, which was the cause of the *Canon* of the *Milevitan* Council, in regard of the errors of *Pelagius*, being in matters of Doctrine ordinarily falling into ministers Confessions and Petitions: And if in such a stress as that, There could be proved a temporary imposition of the use of forms of sound words in prayer, upon ministers who are suspected tainted in matters of doctrine, we should not oppose it.

§. 46 But whom doth our *Brother* call, *The church in the fourth and fifth Centuries, or the three preceding*; or how doth it appear to him, or can it appear to us, That they generally so judged of forms of prayer, or so generally used them as helps to devotion. Certainly our Brother doth not call the 22, or 32, or if there were 42 Bishops in the Council of Laodicea (more none speaks of) the *church in that age*. Besides, that if there were 42, it is possible that 20 of them might be of another mind, for we know that in councils, the *Major part* must carry

it,

it, let the excess be never so small. Yet, That Council of *Laodicea* saith nothing of stated *forms of prayer*, *cap.* 18. onely orders prayers to *be poured out morning and evening*: but that they should be *read*, or recited out of a book given, that Council saith not. Nor doth the Third Council of *Carthage*, Can. 23. quoted by our *Reverend Brother*, *p.* 106. speak any thing at all, nay, it plainly hinteth us the quite contrary, *viz.* *That ministers were wont to compose their own prayers*: onely in regard it was a time of errour, *they required the weaker sort of ministers not to use the prayers they had made for their use, without first shewing them to their more able Brethren. The whole canon as Caranza gives it*, is this,

„ That none in their prayers should name the „ Father for the Son, or the Son for the Father; and „ when they stood at the Altar, They should direct „ their Prayers to the Father: And whatsoever „ prayers any minister should write for himself, he „ should not use them till he had conferred them „ with his more able Brethren.

Doth not this Canon plainly imply, They had no publick set forms at that time: for if they had, there could be no such mistakes as it is made against. This was about the year 398. For the *Milivitan* councill *Anno* 402. It doth indeed decree in that overspreading floud of *Pelagianism*, That the prayers agreed upon by the Council, should be used in that Province: it doth not say no other, onely παντελῶς ἄλλας κατὰ τῆς πίστεως μηδέποτε προσενεχθῆναι. No others against the faith should be used. It doth not follow,

That

That becauſe ſet preſcribed forms, were advantageous to devotion in that *African Province* ſo tainted in its miniſtry with Pelagianiſm; that therefore they are Univerſally ſo, our *Reverend Brother* is miſtaken therefore in ſaying, *That we hold they were in uſe for* 1300 *years* upon the account of theſe Canons: for we hold no ſuch thing, nor ſee any pretence for it from theſe Canons.

§. 47 And for the *Centuries preceding*, we do not think it worth the while for us to write over again what hath been ſaid, almoſt by all who have wrote *Critically* upon the writings of the Ancients, to ſhew the horrible impoſture of the Liturgies ſaid to be made by *St. James*, *St. Mark*, *St. Andrew*, *St. Peter*, *St. Mathew*, *Clemens*, *Dioniſ. Areop.* &c. We onely ſhall ſay this, That they are ſo generally rejected by all ſober, and learned Authors both Papiſts and Proteſtants, that we ſtand amazed to hear our *Reverend Brother*, ſo much as naming them: Let thoſe that are at leiſure read, *Morneium de Miſſâ*, *cap.* 2. What a lamentable ſhift it is to tell us, *That they have undergone diverſe alterations.* Who altered them? In what things? How doth it appear? Thoſe who know any thing, know it was the intereſt of the Church of Rome to have a *ſottish*, *ignorant* inferiour clergy, and that theſe could not do their work without Liturgies, and therefore it was their concern, Firſt to have them made, Then to avouch their original as high as they could. It pleaſed God in their haſt in this buſineſs to let them ſlip into moſt notorious errors, aſcribing *Liturgies* to *Chryſoſtom*, *Baſil*,

Basil, &c. Where were prayers for persons not in being for some hundreds of years after, and Doctrines averred, That all know the Church never knew, for many years after. Now when the forgery is thus detected, for any Protestants to tell us, it is true, There are some manifest interpolations which are of a later date; but the Liturgies are ancient: is both *gratis dictum*, a thing can never be proved; and a fair offer at the destruction of our most convincing argument of the Popish abominable forgery.

§. 47 For what *Mr. Falconer* saith about *Constantines* composing godly prayers for his souldiers, It is a good argument that the church had then no publick Liturgies: for surely *Constantine* needed not then have made any, and it had been a great derogation from the honour of the church. In short our Reverend Brother might have remembred, That his Majesties *Commissioners at* the *Savoy* replied *to that part of his Majesties Commission*, which required them to compare the *English Liturgy* with the Ancient Liturgies of the pure and primitive church.

That they could not find any authentick record of any Liturgy generally imposed upon any national church for more then 300 *years after Christ*, (we believe they might have said 600) and did upon the point challenge the opposite Commissioners to justify that which they make their *Palmanum Argumentum*, Let but the Indifferent Reader See and Judge of what was answered, though it may reasonably be presumed, considering the Learning, and interest

of

of their opponents, that they omitted nothing which could with any truth or modesty be spoken in the case. All they say is this,

„ That there were ancient Liturgies in the church „ is evident, *St. Chrysostoms*, *St. Basils*, and others. „ And the *Greeks tell us of St. James's*, much older „ then they. And though we find not in all ages „ *whole Liturgies*, yet it is certain there were such in „ the oldest times, by those parts which are extant. „ *Sursum Corda*, *Gloria Patri*, *Benedicite*, *Hymnus* „ *veré Cherubinus*, *Veré dignum est & justum*, &c. „ *Dominus Vobiscum*, *& cum Spiritu tuo.* With di- „ verse others, Though those which are extant may „ be interpolated, yet such things as are found in „ them, all consistent to primitive and Catholick „ Doctrine, may well be presumed to have been „ from the first, especially since we find no original „ of those Liturgies from general councils. For „ answer to this,

We shall refer our reader to the Answer of the *Noncon.* commissioners *p.* 76. *Of the account of their proceedings*, *printed* 1661.

§. 48 To bring this point to an issue, There was a book published 1662. called, *A sober and temperate discourse concerning the Interest of words in Prayer*, *where chap.* 3. 4. The Reader may at Large see what we judge of the *Original of Liturgies*, when our *Reverend Brother*, or any for him hath given a strict reply to those two chapters, then we shall think they have more to say for their Antiquity, then we have yet seen. In the mean time we do believe, That

Gregory

Gregory the great (usually said to be the worst of all the Popes that went before him) under the Protection of *Charles the great*, was the father of all those that dwell in these tents; and this eight hundred, or a thousand years after Christ, An imposed Liturgy unless in a particular Province, for a time, in a particular case (such as was that of the spreading of *Pelagianism*) we cannot find. And for a *Liturgy*, to be proposed onely and left at liberty, we know most reformed churches have such a one, and we have before declared our judgment for the reasonableness of it; & he who thinks such an Eminent man as *Gregorius, Magnus*, would do nothing which should disadvantage true Devotion, hath not (we think) attentively either read his story, or considered the Acts of the Governing-part of the church in his time.

§. 49 We are not so uncharitably disposed, as not to think there were many eminently good and judicious men in the fourth and fifth *Century*, who were able to judge what was of true advantage or disadvantage to devotion. But this is that which we say, That the same things are not *at all times*, nor yet to *all persons* advantages; either to publick, or private Devotion. We have already granted *forms of prayer advantages to the devotion of particular persons*, who, being to minister before others, have not attained the *gift of prayer*, i.e. an ability in that duty fitly to express themselves. 2 To the *general devotion of a* church, when her ministers are very many of them tainted *with errors in Doctrine*; which was the cause of the *Milivitan Canon*. We do know that in the fourth Cen-

tury there was *An Arnobius*, *A Lactantius*, *An Athanasius*, *Ambrose*, *Chrysostom*, *Augustin*, *Hierom*, and very many others; but we also know there was an *Arius*, and *Pelagius*: and that their heresies were of desperate consequence, and had over spread a great part of the church: yea, had tainted a very great part of the ministry of it, now it will not follow, That because *set forms* were advantages to devotion in *such a time*, and in *such parts of the church* for a time; therefore they will be Universally so. Nor do we think that either in the *fourth* or *fifth Century*, There was generally such knowledge as in the later ages of the church; nor is it proved, That in those ages, set forms were generally imposed. The Question is. *Whether set forms be advantages or hinderances of devotion to such whom God hath blessed with the gift of prayer; and to such churches who have such ministers, and are not so tainted with erroneous opinions in the fundamentals of Religion?* And thus we think we have fully answered *whatsoever Mr. Falconer* hath offered in answer to this Argument. But because our strict design is not to answer *Mr. Falconer*, but to shew we have probable Arguments inducing us to believe, That what ever it be to others, *It would be sinful for us ordinarily to perform our ministerial Acts in Prayer by reading or reciting the prescribed forms of others.* We will yet proceed to add some further Arguments inductive of such a persuasion in us, still professing, That we do not judge our selves infallible; nor condemn any of our Brethren, who are of another mind in the case: onely

as

as we our selves apprehend and believe, so we speak, so we act; and not out of any factious humour as we are rashy judged.

Chap. IV.

The Third Argument propounded. Both propositions in it proved. The second commandment forbiddeth all means of worship, not directed in Scripture. Mr. Freemans answer considered. What the Nonconf. grant. His instances answered. Bishop Jewels opinion and Bishop Davenants against blind obedience. The Difference between circumstances, and Ceremonies, what circumstances are in the power of man. Why Forms of Prayer may not be commanded, as well as Time and place. Acts, rites and means in worship must appear reasonable in themselves to him who conscientiously obeyeth.

§. 1

We thus state our Third Argument.

To use a mean in an Act of worship, which God hath neither by the light of nature directed, nor in his word prescribed (no natural necessity compelling us so to do) is sinful:

But for us, or any of us to whom God hath given the gift of prayer, ordinarily in prayer to perform our ministerial acts by the prescribed forms of others read, or recited; were for us (no natural necessity compelling) in Acts of worship to use means neither of God directed by the light of nature; nor by him in his word prescribed; Ergo.

The proof of the *major proposition* depends upon these *hypotheses*.

1 That *divine worship is* nothing else but an homage done unto God in consideration of his excellency. In this we think all are agreed.

2 That it belongs to God alone to prescribe both the *Acts, and Means* of this homage: which certainly is the most reasonable thing in the world, That God should tell us what homage he will have at our hands, and how performed. *God hath as much right to appoint the way of his worship, as to be worshipped, saith Dr. Ashton* himself, in his *Case of persecution. p.* 45.

3 God having determined our *Acts of worship*, hath likewise in his *word, and by the light of Nature given us sufficient direction as to the means*: Which if it be true it certainly must be impious to neglect, or despise it, and to *omit* it, and use *others* directed by man would be an implicit owning the wisdom of man as paramount to, and excelling the *wisdom of God*.

4 God hath also (as we conceive) expressly in his word forbidden the use of any other mean in his worship, then what either nature sheweth us, and directeth us as necessary (as we cannot speak a prayer without the use of our tongue) or *what he hath prescribed in his word*. The first of these needeth no proof.

§. 2 To prove the Second, we need say no more then this, That it is evident, *That the use of a mean in worship which ought not to be used quite altereth the nature of the worship*, and of *true*, maketh it *false*.

false. To pray to God is an act of *true worship*, but if a man in prayer set an *image before him* as a mean of worship, it makes it *idolatry*. So as in worship none can pretend a right to prescribe a mean, but he that hath also a right to prescribe the act.

§. 3 For the proof of the third *hypothesis*, we desire but an instance of any *Act of worship* for which we cannot shew a *sufficient mean*, either by the *Light of nature or Scripture directed*. As to what is the matter of our present debate, both the Light of nature sheweth *our own* invention a sufficient mean, and Scripture commands us to *minister* as we have received the gift.

§. 4 But for the last which we think will be most stumbled at, we shall onely mention the *second commandment*. The sense of which we say is this, *Thou shalt worship in no other way, by no other mean or religious rites then what I have prescribed.* The term *Graven image* is undoubtedly a *Generical term & figuratively* put to signify, not onely *that*, but *any other mean* that hath no more of divine institution then that hath. And if this be not the sense of it, it will be impossible to reduce all the precepts in Scripture relating to the manner of *external worship* to the second precept in the Decalogue. To spare saying over again what hath already been said in justification of this, we refer our *Reader* to a book of *Mr. Cottons* called *Advertisements upon a discourse of set forms of Prayer*, p. 17, 18, 19, 20, &c.

§. 5 The *minor proposition* standeth firm, until our Brethren have shewed us where God hath prescribed any such mean. But here again our old Adver-

sary *Mr. Freeman* cometh across us and tells us, „There „is a general command for forms of prayer when „they are imposed, for we are enjoined in Scripture „to obey our Rulers in such things as Gods word „doth not forbid, and such things are forms. To which we answer,

1 That we can find no precept in Scripture in the terms mentioned by him.

2 The same argument will prove that it is the duty of Priests in popish countries in baptism to use *salt, oyl, spittle and cream*, Rulers require it, where hath Gods word expresly forbidden the use of them?

3 We do not know what he meaneth by *not forbidden*, There is an explicit, and an implicit forbidding. God by determining the Acts of his worship, and directing sufficient means for the performance of them hath we say consequentially forbidden any other means to be used.

§. 6 But he telleth us that „*Both in words and „deeds we grant, That a particular command, or „example is not necessary* (we suppose he means to justify any acts, or the use of any mean in the stated worship of God; or else he saith nothing to the matter in question) „*For we sing Hopkins, and Stern-„holds Psalms for which is no particular command.* „*2 We anoint not with oyl though St. James doth „command it.* Because we meet with this so often we who take our selves to be ready to give account of our faith to every one that asketh us, shall once for all tell him what we believe, and hold in this great point.

§. 7 We

§. 7 We believe the *Holy Scripture to be a full, and perfect rule; as of Doctrine, so of worship*, both as *to the Acts and Means of it: with no other help then the light of nature directing the application of some common circumstances, either necessary to all human actions*, (*as time and place are*) *and some common actions and signs signifying no more in sacred then in civil actions*; and this either from *nature*, or the general, guise, and custom of the countries wherein the worship is performed. 2 Hence both we and *all Protestants* deny a power to any man to institute *New ordinances of worship* for which there is in Gods word, no particular precept or example either of Christ or his Apostles: And certainly, worship being nothing else, *But an homage done unto God in consideration of his excellency*, It is every whit as reasonable, That God should direct both the *Acts*, and *Means*, and *Rites of his worship*; As that an Earthly *Potentate* should direct his subjects, or servants the manner of their addresses to him, or the habits they should appear before him in. Gods word especially declaring against *will worship*. 3 Hence we judge, *All Acts, religious Rites, and Means of worship* prohibited by God, which either in expres terms, or by first consequences from some Scriptural Propositions are not in the word of God prescribed, or Commanded.

But natural Reason assuring us, That as all human actions must have some circumstances: So Religious worship being a human action must have some appendant circumstances; either such as are *necessary* to all *human actions* of which number are *time* or

place; *or necessary* for actions of that nature. So we judge it as reasonable, That a bell or a Trumpet should call people to worship God; as *scholers* living in several colledges to a Convocation, or *Towns men* living scattered up and down the town to a *townhouse* or *Assembly*. We take *Pulpits*, and *Pewes*, & Churches to be as reasonable, as that in the Sessions the *Judge* should have a Cushion and a Taller-seat: or the *Major* in a *Guildhal*, or that the *Commoners or Aldermen*, being to sit two or three hours all that time should not be put to stand; but have seats & pewes. In this sense it is true that *Dr. Ashton* in his case of persecution hath told us 48 (after 40 before him) *These circumstances must be, and are not determined in Scripture.* We do yeild our superiours a great power in determining these *Circumstances* of *Religious duties*, as they are *human actions*, without which they are neither at all to be performed, or with no *Conveniency*. Nay further, There are some Circumstances *necessary* upon the account of *Decency*, the not observing of which would make the action appear either from the *light of nature*, or from the *guise and custom of the country* irreverently, brutishly and indecently performed. If any will come *naked*, or half naked, or shoulder-naked into a religious assembly, *or pray to God with his hat on*; we believe superiours may as well restrain them; as they may restrain one that should run up and down a market naked, or one that should refuse to pull off *his hat* when he speaketh to his *Prince*. And so for any thing of this nature, where is onely a general application of the

rules

rules and cuſtoms of places for reverence, order, and decency in all human actions to religious actions: If two or three will confuſedly be babling together in a meeting for religion, we believe ſuperiours may reſtrain them, as well as he may reſtrain ſuch a confuſion in a *Town-hall*, or civil Aſſembly met for any civil ends.

For theſe circumſtances it is true again that *Dr. Aſhton* ſaith, *p.* 50. *They muſt not be left indetermined:* But all this reacheth not *Ceremonies*, that is, *Religious rites* (be they *habits*, or *geſtures*, or *actions* appropriated to *Religious actions*) theſe are quite other things, and muſt have ſomething of the *generical nature of worſhip in them*: *Becauſe of their appropriation to acts of that nature.* We ſay onely, *That no creature hath power to command thoſe things in Gods worſhip.* 1 *Which are in Gods word either explicitly forbidden*, or *implicitly as having ſomething of worſhip in them.* Or 2 Which the *ſuperiour acknowledgeth* not in themſelves neceſſary, and *the inferiour thinks are forbidden.* Thoſe of the firſt ſort being eminently againſt *Piety*; Thoſe of the latter ſort, as eminently againſt *Charity*. Having thus freely and plainly opened our minds, Let us now conſider our Authors inſtances, from which he would make the world believe, That we little value a Divine precept in acts, rites, or means of Divine worſhip.

§. 8 His firſt inſtance is, our Singing *Scriptural Pſalms* in the meeters of *Sternhold and Hopkins*, which (in deriſion) he calls *Hopkins* and *Sternholds Pſalms*. And there is he thinketh the *ſame reaſon for extempore*

Hymns, as for ex tempore Petitions. We have already said enough, and the learned and judicious *Cotton* hath said more to answer this pitiful Cavil; but that we may be troubled with it no more. This objection must be either against the matter of what we sing, or the *form* of the meeter. 1 The *Matter* is *Scripture*; directed by the Spirit of God, composed by the Penmen of holy writ; we abhor any Singing of other compositions in publick worship. 2 It is plain that *singing and by such forms* hath been ever used as an *ordinance of God*, both in the *Churches of Jews* and Christians. 3 *It is manifest not one of many attains the gift of Hymn making.* It is a known saying, *Poeta nascitur.* 4 *We do not know that God ever promised his Spirit to teach his people to compose Hymns, but he hath promised to teach us what to pray for.* 5 *Singing being the joint action of a congregation, cannot possibly be done but by a set form, without notorious and eminent confusion.* It is more then we know, That in the publick congregation the people are all to pray aloud together. 6 We cannot understand how the metrical forms used by us in Singing make the *Psalms* we sing more *Hopkins and Sternholds*, then our *Bibles* are the Translators Bibles.

2 For the *meeter*, it makes no alteration in sense, onely limits the number of Syllables in a pause for order in Singing. We do see many things in the ordinary meeter of our English Psalms which do no better fit the *English idiom* of our age, Then, *with my body I thee worship*, fits it to express the honour which a man ows to his wife: But we see Davids

sense

ſenſe kept in that meeter (as the *Hebrew* ſenſe was much kept, eſpecially in material things, by the 70 interpreters) and therefore we do keep to it. And this we think enough to have ſaid to ſhew the Vanity of his firſt inſtance. We proceed to his ſecond.

§. 9 „Again (ſaith *Mr. Freeman)* when they „viſit the ſick, they anoint them not with oyl, „yet they ſhall be ſo far from producing an inſtance „for ſuch a viſiting from the Scripture, that they „ſhall find the contrary in *St. James.* If they ſay „there is not the ſame Reaſon for that anointing „now which was then: I reply, Neither is there the „ſame reaſon now for unpremeditated prayers, „(forms of prayers compoſed by others he ſhould „have ſaid) as was then, for now forms are comman-„ded by our Rulers, then (according to their opinion) „they were not.

§. 10 In anſwer to which we firſt ask, will our conformable Brethren then, when they viſit the ſick anoint them with oyl? or have they any *Rubrick* for that? How dare they omit it? If it were a ſtanding inſtitution of the goſpel? They are yet a peg higher then we thought off, if they alſo will maintain a power for ſuperiors to abrogate any goſpel inſtitutions. Was it a temporary practice? What an impertinency is it then to urge it?

§. 11 We confeſs we do not anoint the ſick with oyl, not onely becauſe we do not know what oyl to uſe, and much depends upon the kind, whether it wrought by a natural virtue, or by virtue of an inſtitution. But becauſe we learn from *Mark.* 6. 13. That

That anointing with oyl was annexed to the extraordinary, and miraculous gift *of healing*; which gift both reason and experience tells us is now ceased. So that notwithstanding these two instances, *Mr. Freeman* may see, we are consistent enough to our principles. And this we take to be something a better answer and more particular, then what he supposeth we would say, viz. *There is not the same reason now*, That is true; but it is further true, That God in his providence making the miraculous gifts of healing to cease hath taken away any pretended Reason for that practice. Whereas he saith; neither is there *the same reason for unpremeditate forms now, because Rulers command the contrary. We answer*, That *Mr. Freemans* friends think they were then also commanded: But suppose they had been then commanded, doth this make a sufficient Reason for a practice in Divine worship, that man commandeth it?

§. 12 But because this is so oft repeated, as if all the world were drunk with *Hobbism & Parkerism*, believing,

That the Superior commanding, not the inferiour obeying must answer for the sin if any be committed by any such obedience.

Let us discourse this point a little, In the first place this must be an exception to the general rule of Gods word which hath told us, *The soul that sinneth shall dy, and the child shall not be punished for the parent*; or else it must be a new glose; or a thing forgotten by *St. John* when he described sin to us to be, *A transgression*

gression of the law. And Thirdly, They should do well to tell us which way the obliquity of one creatures action should pass to another creature that he should *bear* his Brothers sin. Again if the command of superiors will justify the Inferiours from guilt in their acts of obedience to their commands, The Command of the *Pope* will do it for all under his jurisdiction, and would have done it for us here in England while he was here without controle allowed to be the *Head of the church:* But our forefathers the Martyrs were not of this impudent Religion. If they had, they might have saved their lives. But let us hear what hath been the opinion of more *valuable*, and ancient Protestants in this case, we will instance in two, both eminent *Bishops* of *Salisbury:* The one at the *beginning of the Reformation*; The other dying within a few years last past, *Bp Jewel*, and *Bp Davenant.*

§. 13 What *Bishop Jewel* thought, may be read in *his Apology against Harding, chap. 2. Divis. 7.*

„ The subject (saith he) is bound to obey his „ Prince, how be it, not in all things, but where „ Gods glory is not touched. These Nobles [he „ speakes of those in Scotland] had learned of *St. Peter* „ *It is better to obey God then man*; And of the Pro- „ phet *David*, It is better to trust in God, then in „ Princes, for they are mortal, and shall dy. Neither „ may a Godly Prince take it as any dishonour to „ his estate, to see God obeyed before him, for he „ is not God, but the minister of God. *Leo* saith, „ Christ

„ Christ determined, That we should give to God, „ the things that are Gods; and to Cesar the things „ that are Cesars. Verily this is not to rebel against „ Cesar but to help him, *&c.*

§. 14 In the next place let us hear *Bp Davenant* in his excellent commentary on the *Colossians*, *chap.* 2. *v.* 23.

„ *Ignatius Loyola* (saith he) the father of the Je- „ suites in that Epistle of his, which is read in the „ Jesuites, Colledge every month warneth and com- „ mandeth them seriously by a blind obedience, ab- „ solutely to do whatsoever their superiors com- „ mand, not considering whether it be good or pro- „ fitable, yea or no: for that (saith he) takes away „ the value and merit of obedience.

„ It is also the common opinion of the Papists, „ That there ought to be in Christians such an humi- „ lity of mind, that they must not in the least doubt „ of those things which are commanded by the „ Church of Rome; either to be believed, or done „ in Religion, or in the worship of God: but we „ say he notwithstanding this truly say, That this „ *Blind obedience* is not onely foolish, but *Impious*, and „ *Irreligious.*

„ 1 Because we are not bound to obey superiors but „ in cases wherein they are our superiors, now as to „ Doctrines of *Faith* and *Divine worship*, God alone „ is our superior. If therefore men indeavour to forge „ new Doctrines of faith, or to bring in a *New wor-* „ *ship*, they go beyond the bounds of that power, „ which is committed to them, and are not in this thing

„ thing acknowledged to be our superiors. 2 Because „ the command of an inferiour power doth not „ oblige to obedience when it contradicteth the com- „ mand of a superiour power. *Acts* 4. 19. *We must „ rather obey God then man.* 3 *Because no intelligent per- „ son will expose himself to the danger of mortal Sinning,* „ as the school men speak; but whosoever voweth, „ and performeth absolute subjection, and blind „ obedience to man, exposeth himself to a manifest „ hazard; for every man may err, by commanding „ those things that are evil.

According to the Doctrine of our new edition of Divines we would gladly understand, how any man can run a danger either of mortal sin, or venial either, by doing any thing in obedience to the command of superiors. 4 „ Because what is proper to God cannot „ without great impiety be given to men: But an ab- „ solute dominion over mens souls, & bodies is proper „ to God alone; To him the will of man oweth „ an absolute obedience, to him his understanding „ oweth in all things a prompt assent. But those who „ require this obedience of us use to object, That it is „ not the subjects part to judge of the faith & actions „ of their superiors, they seem therefore to recede „ from their duty when they doubt, whether the „ things be true, and lawful which are published and „ confirmed by the Authority of those who are set „ over them. This he answereth, „ Subjects neither „ may nor ought with a judgment of Authority to „ judge of their superiors actions, but they may and „ ought to judge of them so far as concerneth them- „ selves,

„ selves with a *judgment of Discretion*. *Aquinas* „ excellently gives the reason of it, Every one „ (saith he) is bound to examin his own acts accor- „ ding to the knowledge which he hath from God: „ Whether it be *natural*, *acquired or infused*, for he „ is bound to act according to Reason, It is (saith he) „ confirmed by the Examples of all pious men, who „ although they did not arrogate to themselves a „ judgment of Authority upon Magistrates, or „ Prelates, yet they used their judgment of Discre- „ tion concerning things commanded by them. Thus far that *Reverend* and very Learned man.

§. 15 This is the Doctrine of the *Reformed Churches*, and was wont to be the Doctrine of the Fathers in the *Church of England*, and we humbly offer it to the consideration of our Rulers, whether there can be greater factors for Popery in England, then those who so boldly assert the duty of *Blind Jesuitical Obedience*, and declaim against the *Judgment of private*, and *practical Discretion*: The first is the very foundation of *Popery*; The latter, the foundation of the *Protestant Religion*.

§. 16 But to proceed with *Mr. Freeman* he telleth us, *The Nonconformists have in word granted more then he asketh*. Let us first know what he asketh, then see what they have granted, that which he asketh is our concession, *That it is lawful in the worship of God to do some things not commanded by God*. What have the *Nonconformists* granted, He instanceth in three things.

1 *To command in the circumstances of divine worship, what is generally commanded in the word of God.*

2 *To*

2 *To appoint time and place.*

3 *To appoint such circumstances, without which the worship of God, in the judgment of common Reason, Must be indecently and disorderly performed*; of which he makes the following improvement, *p.* 35. *Of the Reasonableness of Divine service.*

„ 1 A form of prayer is but a circumstance of „ Prayer, and I have proved, That if the Magistrate „ think them convenient they are in the general „ commanded. 2 If he can appoint the time and „ place, which he thinketh most convenient though „ otherwise it would be less, he would fain know a „ reason, why he may not appoint a form, which „ he thinketh most expedient, though otherwise it „ would be less expedient, To appoint to begin at „ such a time is as really a limitation of the Spirit, „ as to appoint a form: For the ordinary reason which „ they speak of, it must either be the Reason of the „ Magistrate, or of the People or both. If they „ mean the reason of the people, Then the sense is, „ That the Magistrate hath power to appoint such „ things, as the People judge reasonable. We thank „ them for nothing: If both, we thank them for as „ much. If they mean that Reason which is best „ without restraining it to any subject, I reply, „ That Reason in the Idea doth nothing, but as it „ is somebodies Reason: Except the Magistrate „ hath power to command what he apprehendeth „ agreable to the best Reason: He must command „ what the Subjects apprehend so, or nothing at all; „ therefore it remains, That that Reason which must

„ judge what is indecent, must be the Magistrates; „ and if he commandeth such things as be indecent, „ so they be not otherwise unlawful; The people „ must submit. *To all which we answer.*

§. 17 As to the matter of our present debate, There were no great loss in granting all he saith; for the matters pleaded against are not onely pleaded as indecent (though none hath power to command any indecent thing in Gods worship) but as *unlawful.* But we know he would then say, we must not then use this as a *medium* to prove them so, *Because they are not commanded.* We will therefore reply more strictly.

§. 18 He saith, we have granted a power to superiors *to command particular circumstances of Divine worship, which circumstances are generally commanded.* For Example, *Reverence* and *Order* are commanded generally as Moral duties, and especial regard is to be had to them in the worship of God. If any will come to the publick Congregation in the ridiculous habits of *moris-dancers, or naked,* The Magistrate may for ought we know command them into a gaol: But what is this to our Authors purpose?, „ *A form of* „ *prayer*, he saith, *is but a circumstance, and that is ge-* „ *nerally commanded in the Divine precepts for obe-* „ *dience to Magistrates.* We answer that we do indeed make a great difference between a *circumstance*, and a *Ceremony.* The first we say is appendant to an *action* as an *human action*; The latter to a *Religious action as a Religious action.* But we do not know that in reference to Divine worship men may

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appoint whatsoever may come under the notion of a Circumstance in the Latitude of the term, nor do we think our Brethren judge all circumstances in worship determinable by creatures.

§. 19 There is a Rhetorical notion of a circumstance, and so Circumstances are usually comprehended in that verse;

Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando.

If this Author thinks, That all Circumstances of Divine worship in this large notion are determinable by man, he must affirm, That *Magistrates* may appoint whom they please to *Baptize & administer the Sacraments*, That is the *Quis*. And that if the *Magistrate* thinks fit to command men to worship God before an image, that also becomes lawful, *quibus auxiliis*, is a circumstance he knows. There is a Logical notion of a circumstance, and so a circumstance is, *Quicquid rei præter essentiam adjungitur*, *Whatsoever is added to the essence of a thing*, and in this sense no ceremony can be a *circumstance*, for the Appropriation of it to the Religious action makes it a piece of Homage done to God; so as it partakes of the general nature of the whole action in which it is used. We never thought that men might institute or appoint such circumstances, as wanted nothing but a Divine institution to make them *True Divine worship*. Will any say, There was nothing of divine Homage in the High Priests garments which he might never put on but in his approaches to God? we by *Circumstances* understand, *Appendants* to actions

as meer humane actions, such are *Time & Place*: and possibly so much of the *quomodo*, as is natural to restrain an indecency, and disorder which the light of nature, or the particular custom of the place sheweth to be such. These things we believe in their kind required in the General precepts of Gods word for *order* and *decency*, hence it appeareth.

§. 20 The fault was not in us but in his own Reason, That (as he tells us) he cannot see why the Magistrate may not as well command *forms of Prayer*, as determine *Time & Places*. Are therefore forms of prayer in the general necessary to the act as human, or as Religious? Or could any one think, That Gods word should set down a certain rule for times and particular places of worship for all churches in the world? This is so miserable trifling, as we are ashamed to make any reply to. But we must follow the Author yet further.

§. 21 He would know *whose Reason must judge in the case? Whether the Reason of the Magistrate, or of the people?* To which we freely answer, If the question be about *Lawful* or *Unlawful*, Every private Christians Reason must judge as to his own practice, unless we will turn Papist and vow *Blind obedience*. If the thing be confessed both by the superior and the inferiour. *A thing in it self indifferent* we believe most *Noncon.* will allow the judgment to their superiors. If the Author will but consult *Bp. Jewells Apology*, *pag.* 435. He will find him laughing at the Papists for their *obedience* in carying baskets from *Palestina to Damascus*, *Sitting 7 years* toge-

together Silent, and watering for 12 *months together a dead tree*. Let the author determin whose Reason was to judge in those cases.

§. 22 To make the busines short, In all Religious commands there must appear to the person that obeyeth some Reason from a divine command; either particularly, or generally requiring the thing, The meer will, and authority of an another in these things is not reason enough to justify our obedience. In matters of that nature we must be very wary of idle, and superfluous actions, To be of no use, and insignificant, is enough in worship to make a gesture or action sinful, yea, and an appropriated habit too. There lyeth no necessity upon the superior to command any such things, nay, to do it will be a sin unto him, as *Gideons Ephod was a snare to his house*, *Judg.* 8. 27. Precepts in such things must be for farther use (and evidently so) then to try inferiours obedience. The lawfulness, or policy of precepts of no farther significancy in things of a meer civil nature, may be disputed, *The Magistrate is the minister of God for good*, *Rom.* 13. 4. But in these matters it is out of question. In matters of civil nature the Magistrate hath unquestionably a far greater power then in them, yet even in those things he that will not grant, that all commands must refer to some general, or particular good will be brought to strange absurdities. But he is a judge of good especially in particular relating to political concerns, he is judge of the best means of order and policy, and every particular person is not to be a *privy counsellor*: which

warranteth in such things much of a *blind obedience*, Besides there are various dispositions of people, several complexions of Political bodies: for all which it is not imaginable that God in his word should have set down particular laws, for their preservation and civil order. Nor hath God in his word laid out any general platforms of civil Goverment: But in *Matters of worship*, There is both a general, and sufficient rule, all the Earth is tied to worship God, and to worship God by the same acts. Every particular person may and ought to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, so as there being a sufficient rule for worship in Scripture both for the Acts, and Rites, and Means of it; supposing *time* and *place* by the church determined, or by the Magistrate; either people following no other rules then the light of nature, and of Scripture sheweth them: may so worship God, as neither he will be offended, nor any good man need be scandalized. It is every individual Christians duty to enquire into the *Mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven*, and to be acquainted with the laws of Divine worship; and he cannot do that there in meer obedience to his superior, which he can neither see the Light of *Nature*, *Reason or Scripture* requireth of him: or which his *conscience* or Reason telleth him is *idle*, *superfluous or ludicrous*; and so under such circumstances repugnant to the *Divine will*, without an high profanation of the holy name of God. If such things be commanded, he must patiently suffer, if he doth them, he unquestionably sinneth against the Lord, who in matters of his exter-

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nal worship hath particularly told him, That he *is a Jealous God.*

§. 23 But our Author goes on telling us, *There are particular commands and examples of forms of prayer in Scripture. Davids Pſalms are prayers, ſo Hoſ.* 14. 2. *Joel.* 2. 10. *Acts* 4. 24. *Luke* 11. 2. Though this be ſufficiently before anſwered, yet in ſhort we again deſire our reader to conſider,

That if this Author by [*commands*] doth not mean, That there is ſome command, that the church of God, and all the miniſters in it, (at leaſt in ſome National church) ſhould uſe ordinarily in their ſtated Solemn prayer certain forms made by others; he ſaith nothing to the purpoſe, we have ſaid *again and again*, That we do not think, *Forms of Prayer unlawful.* That we are *not againſt forms* to be uſed by ſome *perſons*, *at ſome times*, much leſs againſt them as made by any miniſter for his own uſe, and the *propoſing* of a form, which thoſe who will may uſe. *David* made ſome *Pſalms* which were forms of Prayer, but did he make an Act of Uniformity too? Again, a *great Prophet and Penman of holy writ* made forms of Prayer, Suppoſe he had enjoyned the conſtant uſe of them too in all places of publick worship, may therefore men that are no Prophets, no Penmen of Scripture, no pretenders to ſuch an inſpiration do the like? Farther ſuppoſe, That it could be proved, (which it never can) that there were *forms of Prayer* compoſed for, and uſed in the *Jewiſh church*; or that the Lords prayer was intended for a form of words, and commanded to

be ordinarily used for a time, (yet we never met with any that said, The Apostles might ordinarily use no other) how doth this prove, That it was the will of Christ concerning the church under the gospel? That because Christ who was the head of the church enjoined the use of such a form: Therefore any Superior deriving from him may do the like, and add fourty times as much, and enjoyn it to all ministers, after Christs ascension on high, pouring out the gifts of his Spirit upon all flesh, who seeth not what pitiful inconclusive arguments these are. But our Author pretendeth to give some reasons for the Necessity of Imposing forms of prayer. They are but the Ordinary topicks, which all make use of in the case, we will therefore reserve them for a proper place and go on yet with our other arguments.

Chap. V.

The Fourth Argument stated, Because actively to obey in this case is to grant a principle improveable to suppress the total exercise of the gift of prayer, in Publick meetings, Families, Closets, all places to which the Superiors dominion extends. To say, This is not yet commanded, is in part false as to prayers before and after sermons: if true, no answer. The Vanity of those that say though the Superior may impose in part, yet not in whole. The Quota pars *not determined, nor determinable from Scripture & Reason. No power in man to suppress the total exercise of any ministerial gift.*

§. 1. Our

§. 1.

OUr Fourth Argument we state thus,

To agree a principle, which being agreed, is of sufficient force to restrain the total exercise of the gift of prayer, is sinful.

But to agree it lawful for ministers ordinarily in their Solemn prayers, to perform their acts of prayer by the prescribed forms of others, were to agree such a principle; Ergo.

We hope there is none will deny the *Major*, until he hath proved to us, That it is lawful for man wholly to suppress any ministerial gift, and make it useless as to its end, yea, and sinful to use it at any time, (which to us appears a strange task) we shall therefore at present not labour in the establishing of that, taking it to shine sufficiently in its own light.

§. 2 For the *Minor* we say, All Prayer is either *Publick in the Congregation, or Domestick in the family, or Private, or Secret* in the *Closet*. For that which is *made in the Congregation*. We are indeed often told, *That the minister hath a power left him to pray before and after Sermon*. But 1 *Suppose he had*, yet he may be restraind we hope by the superiors precept, and if he be, we hope he is bound to *Obey it*: For why should it be less lawful for him to ty himself to the use of forms in the *Pulpit*, then in the *Desk*? 2 But it were worth the examining whether he *hath such a liberty*? Did the late *Bishop of Durham, Dr. Cousins* think so? Let any minister in his dioceſs enquire about that. Did Bishop *wren* think so? Doth

Mr. Kemp think so? Let the Reader read his sermon on this subject. *Doth the Act of Parliament say so?* But once for all, Let the *Reader* judge of this by what he shall find in the *Printed account of the proceedings of the Commissioners* of both persuasions, p. 19. He shall find, The *Commissioners* on the *Bishops* side (and they were no less then eleven Bishops, and nine Doctors of Divinity of which five have since been made Bishops) thus speaking,

„ We heartily desire that (according to this Pro-
„ posal) great care may be taken to suppress those
„ private conceptions both before and after sermon;
„ least private opinions be made the matter of prayer
„ in publick as hath and will be, if private persons
„ take liberty to make publick prayers.

Here is, *Heartily desire, and Great care to be taken to suppress private conceptions* both before, and after Sermon. It seemes they apprehended, The law gave no such liberty; and therefore are very *heartily desirous*, the *Executors of it* would take care, yea, and *great care* too, that none might take it. Let us therefore hear no more of a liberty (not so much as indulged) and if it were, no more then *indulged* for ministers at all to use their ministerial gift in prayer, There is no such liberty but as assumed.

§. 3 So that the publick ministerial exercise of this gift is wholly suppress't, but yet we are told *Ministers may in their families use their gifts.* This is indeed true, (notwitstanding any law or canon yet extant) onely diverse of those ministers, who use any family prayer, who are to be too the examples to the flock, do not think

think fit to use it but there also limit themselves to the publick book. But the question is, *Whether supposing it be lawful to obey superiours, commanding us to perform our ministerial acts ordinarily in publick solemn prayer by the prescribed forms of others, yea, and necessary too, supposing hereafter superiours should command men to do the like in their families, obedience also in that case would not be both lawful, and necessary?* (We have a scriptural instance, of a Magistrates *edict* reaching to families) We must profess if we could grant the obligation, and judge it lawful to obey in the first (which is our present case) we cannot see with what pretence of Scripture, or Reason we could avoid obedience to a superiors command in the Second case, and we would gladly learn of our Brethren.

§. 4 Nay, supposing a law, of the Latitude of that of *Nebuchadnezzar*, extensive to a closet also. *That we should no where pray to the God of heaven but in the use of the church prayers.* What should hinder but that it should be lawful, yea, necessary to yeild a *ready, active obedience* to it? Will any one say, *That it doth not follow, That because we are bound to obey Magistrates commands for worship, in publick prayers and publick places; therefore we should be bound to obey the same commands made to extend to private worship and places, such as houses and closets.* We must profess we are of another mind, and not able to assign any sufficient reason to the contrary, and should be glad to hear any could teach us. Our dull souls reason thus, Are not *Magistrates* and *Subjects Relatives*, and is not *dominion the foundation*

of

of the Relation, and Relatives use to go together; surely look how far the superiours *Dominion* and *right to that* extendeth, so far *obedience* will be found a duty. So as the question onely will be, Whether the Magistrate hath not a *dominion* over his *subjects* in their *private houses* and closets? If he hath, his commands reach them there, which if they do if the matter be *lawful*, (say our Brethren) it is necessary to obey, and why is not a command as *lawful*, enjoining the constant use of prescribed forms there, as in Churches or Temples? Now the Magistrates daily, and confessedly just punishing enormities in *families*, *closets*, *bedchambers*, are sufficient instances of the extent of the Magistrates dominion to those private places, and consequentially evince the duty of obedience supposing a command, if in a matter wherein the law of God hath given him a power to oblige his subjects. And although it be true, *That the Magistrate, cannot take such a cognisance of what is done in private houses, and closets:* yet that signifies nothing in the case, for our question is, Whether supposing such a command, it might *with a good conscience be obeyed?* If it might, then it must be obeyed (according to our Brethrens principle) then whether the Magistrate knowes of the disobedience or no matters not (yet he may come to the cognisance of it, by children, by eves-droppers, by confessions, &c.) The soul of the offender how ever is made guilty, and stands bound over to the Judgment of the great day. So as we profess we cannot see, but if we might lawfully in obedience to man perform our mi-

ministerial acts in prayer by the prescribed forms of others if the superiour commandeth; We may lawfully also use nothing else but those forms in our families and closets. Nay, we must use no other in case of such a command, so as we cannot do it without implicitly saying, If the *Magistrate commands us to use no other prayers while we live, but the Publick, prescribed forms, either in publick, or in private, either before or after sermons, either in our houses or closets we do judge that it is sinful for us to use any other:* though by this means the *gift of prayer*, in all the ministers of Christ shall plainly be suppressed, and made of no use.

§. 5 We can by no means be satisfied, with what we hear some say, & think it a sufficient answer, viz. *That though man may impose in part, yet he may not impose upon the whole use of any ministerial gift, such a command they say ought not to be obeyed.* This appeareth worse then a figleaf to our consciences. For, 1 *Who shall determin* what is the *Quota pars*? How far he may impose or not impose? 2 *By what rule shall that limitation be made*? The word of God directs him no more to impose upon a part, then upon the whole. Let us but understand by what rule of Scripture, or Reason he shall limit us to pray by forms in the *Desk*, and not in the *Pulpit*; Though he do's go so far, he leaves room for the use of gifts in families: nay, why may he not command the like in *families*? He leaves room yet for the use of gifts in the *closet*. We know when he go's to visit the sick he must keep to them, we must wait to hear what other

other answers our Brethren shall make to this Argument, we can see no evasion from it.

Chap. VI.

The Fifth Argument stated from the Equal lawfulness of obeying a command requiring Ministers ordinarily to preach sermons composed by others. The unlawfulness of obeying such a command proved. The Proposition argued betwixt commands for forms of prayer and forms of Sermons. The Vanity of Ireneus Freemans *discoursed, in pretending to shew a different reason; Because in Prayer the Minister speaks in the name of the people, and because all points to be preached on cannot be comprehended in forms.*

§. 1

WE proceed to a Fifth Argument,

To agree a principle, which agreed, would allow man also a power when he pleased to suppress all ministerial gifts in preaching, is sinful.

But to agree it lawful for ministers to obey man, in performing their publick ministerial acts in Solemn prayer by the prescribed forms of others; were to agree a Principle which once agreed would allow man a power, when he pleased to suppress all ministerial gifts in preaching; Ergo.

We do know that some of our Brethren here will deny us the *Major*, and allow man a power to suppress all preaching, and it hath been whispered in some both *Pamphlets and Pulpits*, *That Preaching in a constituted church is needless, and serveth onely to breed*

breed Disputes and Schisms. It was indeed necessary at the first for the first plantation of the gospel, when men were *Pagans.* But now they are converted it is not necessary. As if *There were not a conversion from sin to God necessary to salvation*, as well as from *Paganism* to a *Christian Profession.* If some of these men had not plowed with a *Popish Asi*, and a *Socinian Heifer* they had never found out this Riddle. *Dr. Fuller* in his church history *p.* 262. tells us, That it was the very Argument the *Popish Abby-lubbers*, *Monks* and *Priests* used to persuade the *Pope* to appropriate to *Covents*, & *Abbies* the tythes belonging to many Parishes: and the *Racovian Catechism de Eccles. c.* 11. hath it plain enough.

„ *Posquam igitur Doctrina Christi secundum con-*
„ *silium Dei, & patefacta, & confirmata fuit abunde*
„ *iis personis quæ eam patefecerent, & confirmarent;*
„ *nihil amplius loci in Ecclesiâ relictum.*

And the *Arminians* agree much with them. *Episcopius Disput.* 28. determineth preaching *profitable*, but not *necessary.* But blessed be God the number of these men in *England* is not great, all men almost acknowledging *Preaching* a great *Ordinance of Christ*, an ordinance, not onely to make men Christians in *name* and outwardly, but Christians *inwardly* and *indeed*, changing their hearts and turning them from all sin and lust to serve the living God. It was the unhappiness of England to have three or four *Prelates* of great power, who thus depretiated the greatest ordinance of the gospel: But as they are gone, and ere this know, whether they in this thing did *well*

or ill? so there are not many that approve their sayings, or will rise up to call them blessed. We therefore take it for granted that Preaching may not be suppressed, and are little affected with a *Critial* Authors wit in distinguishing betwixt *Preaching and Teaching*; and essays to prove it is not the ministers duty to *Preach*, but to *Teach*. In short we think that *Critick* had need himself be *taught*, before he either *preacheth or teacheth*.

§. 2 Our onely question is, *Whether it be in the power of man to suppress the gift of preaching, in a minister of the gospel?* We think it is not, because of the frequent commands in Scripture to ministers, *To stir up and not to neglect that gift, and to minister it.* 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. 1 *Pet.* 4. 10, 11, *&c.* And to us nothing can be more absurd then to fancy, *That God should have given abilities and gifts to men for so great a work as the work of the ministry; and given them an heart to desire the imployment; and the church should have approved of them as furnished by God for his work, and sent into it: and after this, it should be in the power of men to suppress the use of these gifts, and appoint them in stead of it to read some discourses of others to the people.*

§. 3 The onely doubt then can be about the *Minor Proposition* which stands upon this foundation, *That God hath given unto man no farther liberty to stifle and suppress one ministerial gift then another.* Nor can any sufficient reason be given of their farther authority in the one case then the other; and therefore our wise Reformers (seing a necessity to make

make a provision for that most sad state which our and other Reforming-churches were in, in the beginning of *Reformation*, at the same time provided ministers both a book of *Homilies*, and a book of *Publick prayers* and *Homilies* (at first) just proportioned to the Number of sermons they willed to be preached every year. That was 12 on each month. Well knowing, That if they had *Authority* to do the one, they had *Authority* to do the other: And those who had need of the one, had an Equal need (if not greater) of the other. The *Doctor Respondent* therefore within these few years, at a *Commencement* having given the lawfulness of *Imposing and using forms of prayer* for his Question, and being pressed by one of our *Learned Prelates* with this Argument. *That then it was lawful to impose, and use forms of sermons too.* Like a wise man granted the *Consequence*, and denied the *Assumption:* And his hearers thought he *answered* well (to avoid a publick baffle, though he affirmed a falshood by denying the *Minor*) we are sure some of us did, judging the Consequence by no means to be destroyed by the Art of man.

§. 3 Every considerate person will easily understand, That if it be lawful for man to compose *all forms of prayer, and forms of sermons* to be used by ministers, and they may discharge their ministerial office by reading them both: We shall neither need *Grammar-schools nor Universities* to breed up men for the Ministry. Let us but make sure of good *School-dames* in every *Parish* to learn children to read, and every parish will commence a *Nursery*

of very able and sufficient Clerks, that is, Such as can read *Primers*, *Psalters*, *and Bibles*, or any other books of reasonable good Prints. If any will tell us that a Minister hath some other work. We answer, we know of no other, But the *administration of the Sacraments*, where God himself hath made the *Form* certain, & the Minister in those ordinances hath nothing farther (that we know) to do, but to add the application of *Prayer and Exhortation* (the two general acts of his office) to that particular performance. Let none tell us, That he is to *Convince gainsayers*, for that (so far as it is the work of every ordinary minister) it is by way of *plain Scripture*, and *ministerial reproof:* and for that too, there are books enough in English. So that we are confident, That if *St Paul* had thought such kind of Discharge of the ministerial work would have acquitted *Timothy's* soul before God, he would never have so called upon him as he doth, 1 *Tim.* 4. 13. *To give attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee*, &c. Nor have told him that such *labourers in the word and Doctrine, were worthy of double honour*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 11. Nor charged him, To *prove* ministers, (was it whether they could read or no, think we) *Not to lay hands suddenly on any.* Nor charged him as, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. *To stir up the gift of God.* Nor called upon him, *rightly to divide the word of truth* (it had been divided to his hand) he would never have called upon *Timothy* as, 1 *Tim.* 4. 15. *To Meditate on the Scripture, To give himself wholly to that study, that his profiting might appear to all.*

§. 4 But

§. 4 But we find our old friend, *Ireneus Freeman*, here again opposing us, not urging the lawfulness of Magistrates imposing and Ministers using forms of sermons; but pretending a different Reason betwixt *Forms of Prayers*, and of *sermons*; which indeed may enfeeble our *Minor* Proposition we have onely to Examin what he saith, whether it will amount to what he would have it? For otherwise the strength of our Argument is evident enough, to every deliberate Christian. He begins with telling us.

„*That one would in charity think, That these men* „*were none of the Contrivers, or Approvers of the Di-* „*rectory: for these lamentable restraints both of ser-* „*mons, and Prayers are to be found there.*

To which we answer, That, one would in charity also think, That this Author, *a Scholar and Divine*, should speak truth: And not abuse his Reader with a known falshood. Surely he never read the *Directory*, or hoped his Readers never would. Who ever saw one *form of prayer*, or of *a Sermon in the Directory*? Who ever heard any minister tying himself to the words there? Doth not the name shew the matter of that book? It onely *directs the general matter* (which fourty other books do) both as to Prayer and preaching (and surely it is a charitable work) Where doth it so much as direct, much less prescribe a *form of words*, or command the use of any such thing. *Mr. Freemans* Readers must take heed they look with their own eyes; for never were more impudent imposings of that nature, then some men are

now hardy enough to make. But possibly he goes on to more purpose,

„I cannot, saith he, conceive them to be so unlearned, as yet to learn why forms of sermons „should not be imposed, as well as forms of Prayer. „A mans mother-wit, may prompt him with two „Reasons.

We must confess we are so unlearned, and ready to sit at this *Gamaliels* feet, if he can instruct us in the case, and onely fear his *Mother-wit* (as he calls it) not sufficient to instruct us or any part of the reasonable world in this point. But let us hear his two Reasons: for any thing of that nature shall be welcome to us. His first Reason (as he calls it) he thus delivereth.

§. 5 „Because in the Sermon the minister speaketh what he thinketh is true, if it appeareth other„wise, the people may reject it: But in prayer the „Minister (in the name of the people: for he saith „not I but we) presenteth desires to God, which „sometimes happen to be quite contrary to the de„sires of some, yea, of all the people. It may pos„sibly fall out that the people cannot join with him „in one expression, whereby it comes to pass, That „both the Ministers Prayer is a falshood, and that „the people (being in a praying posture) do make a „kind of Profession, that they say, Amen to those pe„titions, which their souls Abominate. Which „makes it appear, why there is more Reason that „people should know beforehand what shall be „prayed, then what shall be preach: which fore-

know-

„knowledge is the effect of forms. To all which we „answer.

That foreknowledge indeed may be the effect of forms, provided that he who Readeth, readeth them true (at which we have more then once heard some very unhappy) but the Question is, what need there is, That people should aforehand know, the *Words and Syllables* by which their minds should be expressed to God: more then the Words and Syllables by which *Gods will* should be declared unto them: both duties must be done in the exercises of *Faith, Love, Reverence, Meekness, Humility*, &c. The pretended Reason now produced by this acute Author is „*Because in preaching the minister speaketh* „*what he thinkes to be truth, and if it be otherwise* „*the people may reject it.* It is true, That the Minister in speaking (if he be not a very wretch) speaketh what he thinketh to be true, and that too in a *Theological sense*; *for he is the steward of the mysteries of God, and of stewards it is required that they should be faithful, he is the Embassador of Christ, and God intreateth by him.* 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. It is as true, That it is possible that a ministers words may be otherwise. What Remedy hath the people? They may *reject* them, ho saith, that is, not believe them. 2 They may if he goeth on complain to the church, who are to say *to Archippus, Take heed to thy Ministry*, If yet he will go on in such kind of preaching, they may and ought to remove him. Is it not the very same case as to Prayer, should not he who prayeth petition for such things, as he believeth to be according to the

will of God? Suppose he doth not, May not the people at the time withold their Amen? May they not complain of him to the officers of the church? Should not they admonish him? And if he go's on remove him from his station? What shadow is here of different Reason? But he saith,

„ In Prayer, the minister speaketh in the name of „ the People, for he saith not I but we.

Pitiful! And when he is preaching doth he not speak in the name of God? Is he not in Christs stead? 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. We would have the reader but consider; Which ought more warily to be done? Is there a fear that the minister in Prayer should beg of God something which the people would not have him ask? (which indeed as to many of the people who have no mind to be purged of their lusts, he doth every time he prayeth as he ought to pray) And is there no fear that in preaching the Minister should declare something which God would not have him declare? And is not this full as ordinary and a thousand times greater error: For it is not the peoples willings that is our Rule in prayer, but *Gods will* on the behalf of people. And we think, The same *reveiled will* of God is the rule of our *preaching* too as well as *Prayer*. And we would fain know, Why the people may not withold their *Amen* in Prayer, as well as in *Preaching*, And their *faith and Assent* in hearing? Are not these subtil ratiocinations, for one to Domineer over his brethren with? He saith,

„ It may sometime so happen that a Prayer may „ be put up and the people cannot join in one Peti- „ tion. That

That surely is a rare case: And it may be it is nothing but the error, and lusts of their hearts hinder them, but that in the same prayer they may join in every petition, the Prayer for all this may be for things *according to the will of God, and in the name of Christ*, which is the ministers rule, not the peoples sentiments, and lusts. But let us now compare. Is is not possible also, That a *preachment, or Harangue* may be made in a pulpit, in which the people cannot find one entire proposition which they can give assent to? How many discourses of late years have we had in Pulpits, pretending to prove, *Men have a natural power to things Spiritually good? That we are not justified by the imputed Righteousness of Christ, but by our own works?* How many perfect *Satyrs, Railleries, and Evomitions of the lusts and choler in the Preachers hearts?* Such as people could not assent to one Proposition, nor in hearing exercise the least *Faith, Love, or Reverence*; but according to Gods will they have abhorred, and abominated. But he saith,

„ The people being in a praying posture, do make „ a profession of assent to the Petitions which they „ abominate.

Doth their posture do it in prayer, & will not their presence and sitting still, do the same in hearing? May they shew their dissent in preaching by turning their backs, and departing: and may they not do the same in Prayer (if they see cause) So as this first pretended Reason signifieth just nothing. Nay, it may be improved to an higher advantage for us. See the *Commissioners Accompt of their Proceedings, p. 20, 21.*

„It is known that in Preaching a man hath far „greater opportunity to vent a private opinion then „in Prayer. It is known *de eventu*, That it is much „more ordinary. And if you say that in Preaching, „The minister speaks not the words of the Church, „but his own, nor unto God but man, and there„fore it is a less matter. We answer, It is as consi„derable if not much more, from whom he speaketh „then to whom: In preaching he speaks as a minister „of Christ in his stead, and name, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. „And it is as an higher, so a more Reverend thing „to speak in Gods name to people, Then in the „peoples name to God; and to speak that which we „call Gods word, Truth, or Message, Then that „which we call our own desire. We make God a liar, „or corrupt his word, if we speak in his Name a „falshood: we make but our selves lyars, if we speak „a falshood to him, in our own names. The former „therefore is the more heinous, and dreadful „abuse, and more to be avoided. We might further add, That if there were any reason in this Reason it would be *of equal force against all conceived Prayers before others*, as well in the *Pulpit*, as in the *Desk*, as well in the family, as in the more publick Congregation. Let us now see if *Ireneus Freemans* Second Reason hath any thing more in it. He gives it us in these words,

§. 6 „Because the minister in his preaching is to „expound, confirm and apply all the Articles of „faith, as occasion shall be which is a work would „require many days, if not years. It would be endless,

„ to comprice the substance of all Sermons in forms.
„ But we pray for the same things continually, and
„ therefore the Directory saw reason to put down
„ the matter of prayer though not of sermons. *Here*
„ *the Author forgot he but even now, had told us the*
„ *Directory had put many lamentable restraints upon*
„ *preaching.*

Here now we confess is something that hath a great shew of Reason. Against the flail of Necessity there is no defence, It must be obeyed, and hath no law. If it be true, as he saith, *That forms of sermons cannot be made comprehensive of all we are to preach*; he saith something. To prove this he assumes.

1 *That the minister in preaching is to open, confirm and apply all the Articles of faith.*

2. *That the substance of these cannot be comprehended in forms.*

The First is granted, but the stress lieth upon the Second; and our advantage is, That no *medium* will serve him to make it good, But, *That they are infinite:* for if they be *finite* they may doubtless with all their appurtenances of Explication, Confirmation, and Application be limited by forms. The question is not whether 12 or 24 forms will comprehend them? But whether, *No Number of forms are comprehensive of them?* Are not all the *Articles of faith* with plentiful *Explication, Confirmation and Application* of them, conteined in many books? Suppose now superiours should command all Ministers, in

ſtead of ſtudying the Scriptures, and compoſing diſcourſes of their own, to read ſome of theſe books by portions. The queſtion is, Whether they might lawfully do this inſtead of compoſing ſermons themſelves, and then preaching them, or of he ſhould command them, That for three parts of four of their time uſed to be ſpent in ſermons of their own, They ſhould do this and leave them at liberty, for a fourth part, to preach from their own parts, and abilities. Were this lawful? If he ſaith yes; we are ſure that *Dr. Ames*, *Mr. Perkins* and all valuable authors we have met with, have determined the contrary, and do believe the whole company of Chriſtian hearers would be found of another mind. And could we think this lawful, We ſhould ſee no further need of *Univerſities*, then to accomplish a few Gentelmen with ſome *Philology*, for which four colledges might ſerve in ſtead of 34. If he ſaith, *Such a command were not lawful, nor could lawfully be complied with*, We would underſtand the Reaſon why, *All miniſters might not in this caſe lawfully obey*? Certainly it muſt be, becauſe in doing this, They ſhould contrary to the Apoſtolical command, *Neglect the gift that is in them, or not ſtir it up, nor rightly divide the word of God: inſtead of ſhewing themſelves workmen that need not be aſhamed*, they ſhould ſhew themſelves *no workmen at all*. If ſuch a thing might not be lawfully commanded what can be the reaſon, but, *Becauſe man who hath no power but what he deriveth from God, can have no power to ſuppreſs and ſmother thoſe miniſterial gifts with which the moſt*

wise God hath immediately furnished his ministers with as means in order to their ministerial acts, and by their having, or not having of which the Church must judge, whether God hath called, or not called them to the ministry? We do here allow our superiours both in church and state a great power.

1 In regard that he who desires that office, ὀρέγεται ἐργου ἐπισκοπῆς, desires a noble work, and that a Bishop as the Apostle saith, should be blameless, *&c.* apt to teach, 1 *Tim.* 3. 1, 2, 3. *Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, v.* 9. and therefore, *v.* 10. *He must be first proved.* We say the church is to *prove them*, whether they be indeed *sent of God*, or meerly thrust on by their *desire of gain, or love of preheminence?* And in this judgment we say, The church acteth in the place of God: and we do think the Christian Magistrate may appoint some of the church to do this work. 2 In regard all *men are fallible*, and those entrusted with this Judgment, may be mistaken in their judgment, and find that the persons they have sent our are not what they took them for, but *blameable persons*, lazy, covetous, unfit to teach, winebibers, strikers, men of ill report, unsound in the faith: we do allow a judgment to the church in case any be found such; *to say to Archippus, Take heed to thy ministry*, to admonish them, to remove them: and we say the Magistrate may command this from the church: but still allowing them men fit for their stations; We say, None can hinder them in the use of their gifts, though they may be restrained in, and reproved for the abuse,

or

or disorderly use of them. For what the superiour doth, he doth *vice Dei*, *in the place of God*, and God having given his ministers, gifts as means in order to this work, cannot be presumed to will the omission of them, whence it must follow, That the commands of the church in such a case are contrary to the will of God, and to be superseded by, *It is better to obey God then man.* The same reason holds against forms of prayer to be imposed upon all ministers; yet certainly forms of Preaching are as necessary, 1 *For Uniformity.* 2 *To prevent Heresy.* 3 *For people to know, and deliberate beforehand what they should give their assent unto*; which are the great arguments for forms of Prayer, to which we shall hereafter speak particularly.

§ 7. *Mr. Freeman* assumeth in the third place, what is false, viz. *That we are continually to pray for the same things.* Certainly we have neither the *same sins* at all times to confess, nor the *same wants* at all times to begg a supply of, nor the *same receipts of mercy* at all times to give thanks for; and therefore forms of prayer will no more fit us then *forms of preaching*; where neither have we any new gospel, or doctrine to preach. Witness that known *Ipswich story*, Where an eminent son of the church, not being able out of the Liturgy to fit the case of the man that was goared by an Ox with a thanksgiving was put to it to read, in his case, *The office for churching women.* We must profess we tremble at the force of the consequence of this Argument, so horrid a thing do we look upon it to establish a power in

man at his pleasure to smother, and totally to suppress ministerial gifts, The great means which God hath thought fit immediately to give, and by his word to appoint for converting, and perfecting souls, and make them wholly useless, That we stand amazed, that any understanding Christian should agree to it.

§. 8 But we hear some saying, *That they do not agree to any such power, though they think, they shall not sin in obeying such a command: yet they think the superior sinneth in commanding.* To which we answer, We must grant that there are many things which the superiour cannot command, but he must sin; yet the people may without sin obey, if they be commanded. And in requital to us for this concession, we are sure the most wise and sober of our brethren will grant to us, That there are thousands of other things which can neither lawfully be commanded, nor obeyed if commanded. The question is in which order of things, *The ordinary discharge of our Ministerial acts in prayer by the prescribed forms of others is?* Or whether in neither of them: but such as may both be *universally commanded & also used?* Our Brethren (we believe judge the last) but for advantage against us, Suppose them in the first order, we think them in the Second order, Because *Prayer is a divine institution Praying and Preaching are both so, and great means in order to the conversion, edification, and eternal salvation of souls:* and that in order to both of them, God hath furnished his ministers with gifts. Man saith, you shall not use *that means,*

but

but another mean in the performance of those acts which I judge more accommodate to this end then your own gift. To say no more, Those who think, That *obedience* in this case is not a *disobedience to God*, seem not to have that *Reverence for God*, which we desire that our souls may be possessed of to judge his wisdom paramount to the wisdom of men.

§. 9 When we could relieve our selves by thinking, *But there is yet no such thing required of us, or ordinarily to perform our ministerial acts in preaching, by reading sermons made to our hands*, We find we cannot: because our consciences tell us we grant the Principle, *That it may be done, and if commanded we are obliged no more to dispute such command*, In granting man a power to suppress, or smother one ministerial gift, we yeild him a power for him to impose upon us as to the other, and oblige our selves to obey. We must profess, let others think what they please, we cannot but judge, That those who can swallow this and stumble at a *Ceremony*, do but *strain at a gnat*, while unwarily they *swallow a camel*. This is more to us, *then a thousand surplices, or rings in marriages*. But we have said enough to establish this argument, which we cannot find any where answered in the *All-satisfying Mr. Hooker*.

Chap. VII.

The Sixth Argument Stated and Justified, Whether the precept for ministerial Vocal prayer, includes not the use of our own gifts? The precept for preaching or di-

ordinarily so interpreted, There is in all languages a difference betwixt the words that signify to Read, and those by which the Action of Prayer is expresst.

§. 1

WE proceed to a Sixth Argument which we thus form,

To pretend to perform an act of Divine worship, and at the same time not to do it, is sinful:

But for ministers furnished by God with the gift of prayer to perform their ministerial Acts in prayer, by the prescribed forms of others, is to pretend to the performance of an act of Divine worship, and at the same time not to do it; Ergo.

The proposition will be granted, by all who will be so just as to acknowledge, It is sinful both to *mock God, and to deceive our own souls*, so as all we have to prove, is the *Assumption*, and that depends upon the resolution of this single question.

Whether the Precepts for Vocal ministerial prayer, doth not imply the first forming of the petitions in our hearts, which we utter with our lips.

Where we desire our Reader to observe, That the question is not about the precept for *Prayer* in the general, but about *Vocal prayer*, when we are to express the desires of our hearts by the words of our lips, such is all *Ministerial prayer*. The case is quite otherwise when we onely pray, but do not minister in prayer. We know *Hannah* may pray, and her voice not be heard: but we also know, That a *minister* in his publick ministry must not so pray (as we hope

hope all will grant) Now we profess we do very much incline to the affirmative part of the question, That is, we think, whersoever God hath commanded his ministers in their Publick ministry to pray, The meaning is; *That they should first in their own hearts form such petitions as they judge according to the will of God, both on their own behalf and their peoples, and then to express such conceptions and desires by their own words*: and we are induced thus to judge from these reasons.

§. 2 The whole world almost (the Christian world we mean) thus interpreteth for *Preaching*. No sober Divine (that ever we met with) ever said that a minister of the gospel could discharge his ministerial office in preaching (no not in one *Individual Act*) by *reading* or reciting another mans sermon. *Mr. Perkins & Dr. Ames* (two of our *Protestant Casuists*) determin the quite contrary, and tell us, That, *To Read or recite another mans sermon is not to preach*, and therefore a late hypercritical son of the church took himself concerned (in a book printed some few years since) to distinguish between *Preaching*, and *Teaching*: and took upon him to learn us a new lesson, That a Minister is not bound to *Preach* but to *Teach*. And that (if we may believe him) he may do, By reading *another's Sermon, or good book, By writing a good book, By setting another to teach, By living a good life*, &c. But none we know off ever affirmed, That to read or recite another mans Sermon was a lawful discharge of the ministers duty in *Preaching*. What is the reason? Because he who doth not exer-

cise

ciſe his own gift in inventing and compoſing. Chriſt hath bid us, *Go Preach.* What then is the meaning of that? Have not all Divines agreed to interpret it thus? *Go ſtir up the gift that is in you, Give your ſelves to the ſtudy of the holy Scriptures, and to Meditation. Compoſe diſcourſes of Chriſt and Goſpel-doctrines, then communicate them by your voice to people; opening to them the ſenſe of the Scriptures, applying the will of God reveiled in them to the conſciences of all, dividing the word of God aright, that you may ſhew your ſelves workmen that need not be aſhamed.* Chriſt hath alſo bid us *Pray*, his great Apoſtle hath commanded, *That ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions and giving-thanks be made for all men.* How come we to interpret this thus? *Go read a form or forms of words which other men have made for you.* We do not ſo interpret *Go preach.* It is true (as we hinted before) there is a *praying in the Spirit*, which ſome who have no mind to conſider the force of an argument may object to us; but we are ſpeaking of *Vocal miniſterial prayer*, and what is the will of God in commands which relate to that ſpecies of prayer: Such prayer alone he can uſe, who in that duty miniſtreth unto others; and every one will grant, That there is ſuch a duty. A whole Congregation muſt not pray *in the Spirit* onely, without any voice heard. The Queſtion is, Whether he who in prayer miniſtreth to others, more fulfilleth the precept of God, concerning miniſterial prayer; then he who readeth, or reciteth onely other mens Sermons fulfilleth the precept concerning *Preaching*? We think not.

§. 3 It is yet a farther question, If he only *readeth such prayers, Because the words used in Scripture in all languages to express reading, are quite other from those used to express our duty in praying, and the action of Reading, and praying are quite differently expressed to us?* Those who know any thing know, That the *Hebrews* had a great scarcity of words, the Radical words in their language, hardly bearing the proportion of a fifth part to those in *Greek* or *Latine*: So as they are forced to make use of the same words to signify sometimes quite contrary actions: Ordinarily, to signify diverse actions if they have but the least *cognation* each to other. So that it is not so easy to argue from the old Testament upon this *Topick*. Yet we cannot but observe that the words used, *Hos.* 14.2. *Joel* 2.17. is אמר. We will not be too confident of it, but we are not aware of any text in the old Testament, where it signifieth that kind of speech which is but the recitation or repetition of words formed by others. קרא indeed which is generally used to express *Reading*, when it is joined with [upon the Lord] or [upon the name of the Lord] doth sometimes signify the action of prayer. As it never signifys to read without the addition of, *The book of the law*, or *the law*, or some such substantive following it. Both *Pagnine* and *Buxtorf* say, it properly signifyes, *Clamare voce significativâ verbis expressis & conceptis*; But as we before said, the exceeding penury of words in that language makes it hard to establish an argument from proper and significant words in it. In the Greek the case is much plainer, The precepts

cepts for prayer are every where expressed there, by ἀφορίζειν, and λέγειν, &c. never by ἀναγινώσκειν the proper word used to signify reading. In short, Speaking may be conceived by us as a *Generical term*, and is either *Mental*, or *Vocal*. The first we call λόγον ἐνδιάθετον or ἐνδιάθετος. The Second λόγον προφορικὸν or προφορὰν, which is a speaking to the capacity, and understanding, or sense at least of others, so as they may know what we say. And this again is twofold. 1 The one is, The re-forming of words which others have first conceived in their minds, and committed to writing for us, or which they dictate to us. If they be written down or printed for us, and we recite them, looking upon the characters in the books, This we call *Reading*. Criticks tell us, That *Legere, est oculis scripta percurrere, quoniam litera oculis legi*, id est, *colligi videntur*. This cannot be done without the help of our eyes, which gathering up the letters, makes a representation of them to our understandings, This action the Greeks express by ἀναγινώσκειν & ἀναλέγεσθαι. Or else we Reform words conceived by others and dictated to us, our ears there gathering up the sounds of them. This in English we call *Reciting*, *or Repeating*. The Latines *Recitare*, *Repetere*, *from* re *and* cito, or re & Peto. 2 There is a speaking which is the forming of words, which we have first formed and our selves conceived in our own hearts. Neither *Legere*, *nor repetere*, *nor recitare* in Latine. Nor Ἀναγινώσκειν or ἀναλέγεσθαι in the Greek, are expressive of this action. Every one would deride him, that being to express the action of him who

made an argument, or pronounced an Oration, should either in Greek say, Ἀναγνῶ λόγον, or in Latine *Legit orationem.* The words expreſs Actions ſpecifically diſtinct, ſo as though we lay a greater ſtreſs upon our arguments before mentioned then upon t is, yet we cannot think this altogether vain and impertinent; we cannot but make a great queſtion, Whether if we should think to fulfil the command of God for our duty in *Vocal* and *miniſterial prayer, by a reading forms,* ready compoſed for us: we should not come short of what God requires of us in the action, and ſo both mock God and deceive our own ſouls? we can find neither *precept*, nor *preſident* for ſuch praying.

Chap. VIII.

The Seventh Argument from the tendency of the principle to level the ſacred office of the miniſtry to the capacity of the meaneſt of the people ſtated, & proved. The laſt, from the Unbleſt effects of forms univerſally impoſed, Three bitter effects, or conſequents inſtanced in, proved from experience and Reaſon. The concluſion of the Arguments againſt the lawfulneſs of preſcribed forms, to be univerſally impoſed or uſed.

§. 1

We proceed to a Seventh Argument,

That principle, which levelleth the performances of the great and ſacred office of the miniſtry to the capacity of the meaneſt of the people, cannot be a true principle:

But

But this Principle, That it is lawful for a minister of the gospel, ordinarily to perform his ministerial acts in prayer by the prescribed forms of others, levelleth the performances of the great and sacred office of the ministry to the capacity of the meanest of the people; Ergo. *That Principle is not true.*

The proposition doth but presume the truth of this, *That God would never have erected an office or order of persons in his church to do onely that which the meanest person in the church had a natural ability or power to do.* There is nothing plainer in the whole book of God, then that God hath established a peculiar order of persons to be his ministers, in his name to declare his will unto his people; and on their behalf to intercede with God in prayer: Now if they may do the one by *forms of sermons* made for them, and the other *by forms of prayer also made for them*, This is no more then the meanest of their people could do as well as they: it requireth no extraordinary knowledge in the Scriptures, no *study and meditation*, &c. The minister of the gospel would onely stand distinguished from the people by *imposition of hands upon him.* He would have nothing to do but what any one might do, supposing him under the same circumstances of ordination. The Apostle Paul needed onely have given *Timothy* a charge to have found out *faithful men:* for such as should be ἱκανοὺς, *able*, they were easy enough to find if this were all the ability requisite. Now we cannot entertain any such thoughts of God, especially considering, how much care he hath taken in his word,

For a *double honour* for such as labour in the *word and Doctrine*; which Divines do interpret of *Reverence, and Honour*, and *Maintenance:* And if that be not the sense of that phrase, yet we are sure that both of them are by many other Scriptures required for the ministers of the gospel. Supposing this were lawful, there were no great reason for either. 1 Not for any *peculiar maintenance*, it were but ordaining so many of the people, and that charge might be saved: Besides the *reasonableness of maintenance*, depends very much upon *their separation from worldly businesses that they might study, and attend to their office, and be fit for their work*; but none of this were needful, if the great acts of their ministerial office might be so discharged. 2 For *Honour and Reverence*, God that knoweth our frame, knew it would be hard to gain of the world a reverence for those, whom people should onely see their superiors in a notion, or by an inoperative character. We therefore observe that God himself, when hee called any to a place of publick employment, constantly capacitated them to some farther noble and powerful actions, then others could do; or set upon them some special sensible marks of his favour, by which rationally an honour, and reverence was gained for them. *Moses* is called *up to the mount, his face shineth* so as they were not able to look upon him. *Moses and Aaron* are empowred to do *miracles*. So also the Prophets, and the latter to foretel future contingencies. The *Apostles work miracles, speak with tongues*, &c. and though these extraordinary miracu-

culous operations be ceased, which were at first to give the gospel credit in the world: yet he still gives *gifts unto men*, and that which gains a reverence for ministers is, when people see them, in *gifts and graces*, higher by the shoulders then themselves. There is nothing of such efficacy to destroy the ministry, and to make the officers and offerings to be a contempt; as to let the people see or to induce them to believe, that they are no other then what the meaneſt of them could offer. And of this every day giveth such an ample experience, That it were idle for us to spend many words in the proof of it. But this would follow, *viz. That God hath* erected a sort of officers, to do that which the meaneſt people might do as will as they; if it be lawful ordinarily to perform ministerial acts in Prayer and preaching by the prescribed forms of others: for setting aside the application of those general acts, there is nothing in the administration of the Sacraments, but any one may do who hath hands and a tongue. This makes it very probable to us, That this principle is false, and that it is not lawful, *&c.*

§. 2 It were an easy thing to multiply arguments, but we shall onely instance in one thing more, and that is those *unbleſt effects*, which are matters of demonstration to us. We hope the Argument will not be judged improper, both because our *Saviour hath learned us the Topick*, and most of the *Arguments* brought for such forms are beholding to *this Topick*. Besides that we say in Logick, *Talis causa qualis effectus*, which it true, where the effects are natural

and any way necessary. Yea, or ordinary. But our Saviour hath taught us to conclude what *the tree is from the fruits*. Math. 7. Let us therefore instance in some too evident effects of *forms of prayer universally imposed, and to be ordinarily used by ministers.*

1 The First is, *The filling of the church of God with an ignorant, lazy, and sottish ministry.* This we confess is no necessary consequent. *A minister may be a diligent, painful, holy man that yet in his ministerial prayer, may think fit to use the prescribed forms of others.* Blessed be God we have had, and have very many that are so. Far be it from us, either to say or think otherwise. But we say, That the establishing this for universal use, opens a door for such persons to enter in, and as a deluge overflow the Church. And while such a door is open, it is not to be expected but they will enter in, and it is evident many such have ordinarily entred in. Experience tells us, That conscience is not enough in all to oblige them to their duty, nay, That the very best of men had need of all the obligations that can be laid upon them, over and above the bare obligation of conscience arising from the force of the Divine precept. We have before said, That *forms of sermons* may every whit as lawfully be imposed, as *forms of prayer*. Supposing both, we would fain know, why a minister may not neglect the use, or stirring up of his own gifts, improving his mind by study and meditation? nay, if his own lusts so incline him, why he may not spend the whole week at an alehouse, and be ready too for his work on the Lords day? He will have no ty upon him

to

to take more pains in his ſtudy, and meditations from the work he hath to do: nor from any honour in doing of it well, his work (if it be meerly to read firſt Prayers, then an Homily) needs no preliminary pains, and may be done as laudably *ex tempore*, as upon the longeſt premeditation: Whereas if every one were obliged to pray, and preach conſtantly in perſon, and in the excerciſe of their own gifts, men would have an obligation upon them to ſtudy, & to meditate, and to give up themſelves to their proper work, and would not find ſo much leiſure for markets, and taverns and coffee-houſes. Or were forms of prayer onely recommended and left to liberty, men would have ſome obligation upon them from honour and repute to *Take heed to their miniſtry.* Beſides the *Teſt of miniſters* upon *ordination* would be proportionable, none would be admitted to that ſacred office, but ſuch of whoſe abilities, both for praying and preaching, a trial would be firſt made, and thoſe fitter for any other employments, would (and that juſtly) be remitted to the proſecution of them: whereas indeed there is no reaſon for ſuch a ſcrutiny, if according to the Doctrine of one whom we knew (but wonder how he raiſed it from his text) That *Reading is Preaching and Teaching*; he ſhould have added *praying* too, A very *ordinary* Ordinary may judge, *An legat ut clericus?* But this is but the firſt ill effect we thought reaſonable to inſtance in.

§. 3 A Second (of no whit inferior evil conſequence) is, *The loſs of miniſterial gifts and abilities as to perſons that miniſter.*

That this *de facto* is, and hath proved *the effect of forms*, is past all denial; from a *Clericus cum libro*, came a *clericus absque libro non valet ova duo*. Multitudes of instances of this nature are and have been, we have known some of us persons of *honour* and *quality*, by this very thing brought out of love with *prescribed forms*, sending for one after another in a sickness, and finding them not able to pray with them, beyond the *office for visitation of the sick*, and the *Litany*.

§. 4 Thus is that Scripture fulfilled, *Math.* 25. 29. *For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath.*

To every one that hath, i. e. That hath for *his Masters use*. That hath and useth them for his Masters service, and honour in the Acts for the performance of which his Master hath given them to him: *To him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance*, His gifts shall improve, and grow more, and more: But from him that *hath gifts* (as the man in that parable had his *masters talent*) so as to *have them not* for his masters use, i. e. *so as not to use them in his masters service, for the performance of those acts to capacitate him for the performance of which his master hath given them: even that which he hath shall be taken away*; he shall loose his parts, and gifts.

§. 5 Nor is this more then the providence of God doth ordinarily make the punishment of the not using any habits, either wholly acquired, or (though founded in nature) yet improved by study, and

practi-

practice whether of more or less Spiritual tendency. Every days experience teacheth us it, The preserving almost of any gift, or faculty depending upon the use and exercise of it. A knowledge and skill in writing, or speaking any language, or in the practice of any art whether liberal, or mechanick, is in a few years lost by disuse of practice. So as it is not at all to be wondred at, that there should be the same effect of a disuse of a Spiritual gift, which we naturally do not so much delight in, as in such which are of a more secular use, and afford us more sensible profit, and pleasure.

§. 6 We do know, That a constant exercise of the gift of prayer, though it be but in our families, will preserve the gift in a great measure. We say in a great measure, for wholly it will not, we frequently see, That the minister who can with great freedom preach to a few in a country-church, is not able to do so in a great, or learned auditory; through a diffidence, and distrust in himself. And we believe the same of a minister that is consciencious to use his own gifts to pray twice a day in his family, if he wholly omits the like performance in a congregation, and tieth up himself to a form, we much question, whether after some few years, he would be able, if he set himself to it to pray otherwise then by a form in the Congregation, we see he that hath used himself to notes cannot preach without them, how able soever he be.

§. 7 We do with all humble thankfulness to God, and due honour to the persons acknowledge, That very

very many of our brethren in the ministry who do conform, have not felt this ill effect of their use of forms, but are able to pray *pro re natâ*, as God offers them occasions, and that to great acceptation, and with eminent abilities. But as the number of these comparatively is very few, so we believe that both they, and we are for this preservation of those eminent gifts, beholding, not onely to their constant praying without prescribed forms in their families: But also to that liberty of praying by conceived prayer before and after sermon, which they have assumed, and do assume a liberty no more then indulged to them, The statute-law alloweth it not. It is sufficiently known, That diverse late *Bishops*. (Who may be presumed to have known the law both of church and state) severely forbad it, suspended diverse for the use of it. And we do believe, that even to these of our brethren who yet by this means preserve their emeninent gifts, Seven years experience of tying themselves to prescribed forms in the pulpit, as well as in the desk, would justify what we say: and that at the end of them, they would find a decay at least of those gifts, though all this while nursed up by a more private practice in their families. Ability to the publick exercise of ministerial gifts will (like some creatures) hardly be kept alive in a confinement to the walls of a private house.

§. 8 Besides that (as we before proved) granting the lawfulness of these commands as to, and ministers practice in publick prayer, and the liberty of using ministers gifts at all in publick prayer, may at any

any time be knockt down by the same cudgel. And for the liberty of using gifts in private Domestick-prayer, it will not be able with any modesty to ask farther favour then that of *Polyphemus*, to be devoured last: it will but wait for such a command, as is now with reference to Desk-prayer, and hath been lately throughout some dioceses pressed as to all publick Pulpit-prayer, and as we heard before passionatly wished, That it might be revived, and urged (for they thought there is already a warrant by law though dormant for it) and then certainly, all ministerial gifts would quickly sleep their last sleep.

§. 9 Besides this, How many are there, while publick prescribed forms are imposed, who will magnify them, they must be the very *sword of Goliah none to them.* And this must be taken *de fide*, as matter of faith; because the church commands them without examining either the comprehensiveness of the matter, or the decency of the form, or the dueness of the connexion of phrases, or the safety of any expressions, or the fitness of their fashion to the present age to excite affections: and while they do so, they will think, and do think using their gifts in their families, while they have a publick-book in the house, like offering *a female, while they have a male in their flock*: and accordingly in hundreds of ministers families there is nothing heard, but the *Prayers of the Church*; or if any thing, It must be *a form*, Conceived-prayers are defamed, the others have all the repute, and hence it is, That though

though indeed the loss of ministerial gifts be not an *universal*, and necessary effect of ministers limiting themselves by prescribed forms in some parts of publick worship: yet it is a certain effect as to very many, and is like enough to be as to many more, as that practice shall gain more repute and authority. But we shall add no more to our discourse upon this second effect.

§. 10 A third if not *natural effect*, yet, *experimented consequence* of them (and that of a very sad and melancholick consideration) *is a flood of iniquity which the universal imposing of them hath for more now then an hundred years caused in our parts of the world.* This, This hath been the mother of those *bitter words*, with which many, (and those ministers of the gospel) both in pulpits, and in printed books, have vexed the righteous souls of their brethren, who have had nothing to reply, but, *The Lord rebuke you.* Hence the uncharitable and ungodly representations to superiours of men, *of whom the world was not worthy.* Hence the *suspensions, and silencings* of so many thousands; the *imprisonments* and *ruins* of so many eminent servants of God, with their families: which have caused so many appeals to the great day, and hath made so many thousand cases depending before the great tribunal betwixt poor ministers, and their families, and their *Ecclesiastical superiours.* Hence the *separations of Christians in communion* one from another. Upon this must be charged, and at last come most of the suspensions, silencings, imprisonments, revilings, sufferings of all sorts of the righteous

teous servants of God even, from the first disturbance upon that account made at *Franckfort* by *Dr. Cox*, (hunting out *Mr. Knox*) unto this very day: which (with a thousand evills more which we forbear to mention) had been all prevented, if *Dr. Cox* his Spirit, and some others of his age could have allowed, The ministers of God to have served him in the use of their own gifts: or at least allowed, That a *publick Liturgy* should have been by authority proposed, and commended, but left at liberty. We will not say but many of our forefathers, and brethren, may by their passions have increased the heap of these sins, we know they have, and excuse them not unless it be a *Tanto*. *Zipporah*, (under her circumstances) might be a little excused, though she threw the foreskin of the child at her husband, and said, *A bloudly husband hast thou been to me.*

§. 11 We say, That we reflecting upon these bitter *effects*, and *consequents*, which are obvious to every eye, cannot but think it very probable, That a submission to this practice is not lawful, but the principle false, which must justify our such submission, viz. *That it is lawful for us being ministers of the gospel, who durst never have entred upon the sacred office of the ministry if we had not hoped, and the church had not first judged, That we were furnished with abilities both to pray and preach, to perform our ministerial acts in prayer, by reading or reciting forms prescribed by others.* We cannot but say, surely if this thing had been pleasing in the sight of God, if our Brethren that for these many years have done it, had in it

done

done what God would have had them do, we should not have seen such effects and consequents of it; and those so far from abating in this long process of time, that we see them every day more and more increasing. How be it, in this thing we are far from judging our selves infallible, and therefore do not condemn our brethren, nor judge them who are otherwise minded to us in this case. But pray God, That if we be in the mistake, God would reveil it to us. But as we from our hearts believe, so we speak, so we must practice: and beg no more then a liberty for us so to do, leaving our Brethren to the latitude of their own consciences. If we have said enough to evince to the world, we are not such *fools*, or sons of *Belial*, as *Dr. Parker*, *Dr. Ashton* and many more in their printed discourses would persuade our superiors we be; and as we are daily represented from inconsiderate tongues of them that have the sole priviledge of publick-pulpits, tis all we aim at. And whether we have done that or no? We freely leave to the judgmeut of all sober, intelligent and unprejudiced persons. It will be time enough, when we are convinced by our adversaries, or it be proved by them to the world, That these arguments are of no force. To examin whether we have not also probable arguments to persuade us, That the use of *significant ceremonies*, *Reordination*, &c. is not lawful. We shall shut up our mouths, and our discourse at present with considering in a single chapter, what our Brethrens arguments are for the *lawfulness*, or *expediency of such prescribed forms to be universally imposed*

posed or used, where we shall have liberty to weigh what contrary good effects of them are pretended: And whether they will ballance these evil effects and consequents which we have mentioned?

Chap. IX.

Several Arguments answered brought to prove the lawfulness of set forms by several Authors. Ireneus Freemans *and* Mr. Falconers *reasons for the lawfulness or expediency of them considered, and answered.*

§. 1

BEfore we come to reply to the Arguments alledged against our opinion in this case, we shall onely desire our Reader to consider, That all that which our Brethren labour for, is but to prove the thing in dispute betwixt us, may *lawfully be commanded*, They do not so much as pretend it *necessary*. This is all the *Reverend Author* of *Libertas Ecclesiastica* pretendeth to, or indeed any other who hath wrote ought worthy of our notice.

§. 2 But to make our work the shorter in answering objections, let us admonish our Reader wistly to consider, That the matter in question which was to be proved is this.

That it is lawful for ministers of the gospel, furnished with the gifts of prayer, ordinarily to perform their ministerial acts in publick prayer by the prescribed forms of others, and those such, as cannot pretend to any immediate Divine Inspiration.

§. 3 To this purpose they thus argue,

What God hath not forbidden is lawful:

But God hath not forbidden this to ministers; Ergo.

This is an old souldier of the churches, and hath fought many a field, yea, never was there a Battel fought between a *Con.* and *Noncon.* but this commanding Argument appeared. It hath been wounded, and had its head cut off oftner then ever *Hydra's* was by *Hercules*; but how it comes to pass we know it not, like that monster, it puts up its head again in the next pulpit, or press. Let us once more try a fall with it.

What God hath not forbidden is lawful.

True, what God hath not forbidden either *Generally or particularly*, either ~~even~~ literally, or by direct consequence of Scripture, is lawful: But if our Brethren by *Forbidden* mean, *Particularly*, and *Expressly* forbidden, or *Literally* forbidden, and lay the Proposition thus,

Whatsoever is not in the letter of Scripture, particularly and by name forbidden, that is lawful. Our Brethren will we trust give us leave to deny the Proposition; because they agree with us in determining a hundred things to be sinful, and some of them in a most heinous degree sinful that are not particularly, and by name forbidden onely as they fall as Specials under some other Generals, or by a first, and just consequence: If they so understand the Major, we do think, *That ministers are in Gods word forbidden plainly enough forbidden, having abilities to express their own and their peoples minds to God in publick prayers,*

prayers, ordinarily to perform their ministerial acts in prayer, by onely reading, or reciting forms of prayer composed by others, being no Gods, nor by any plain designation of God appointed to compose such forms for the use of the church. Forbidden. 1 By the second commandment, as a mean of worship not instituted by God. 2 Forbidden by all those texts mentioned in justification of our first argument commanding us, To *stir up*, not to *neglect* our *ministerial gifts*, but as every man hath received the gift so to minister *word it*, &c. 3 Forbidden by all those texts that command us to *worship God* in the best manner we can, *with all our hearts, all our souls, all our strength*; not having a *male in our flocks to offer a female.* 4 Forbidden by all those texts that require of us in prayer the highest *attention* of thoughts, *intention* of mind and *fervor of affections.* All which we have before justified under our five first arguments: so as in short, we deny the *Minor* in that first Argument, and if all do not think it forbidden in this manner, yet we do, and our consciences must be the proximate rule of our actions: so as it is at least to us *forbidden* from *Rom.* 14. 23.

§. 4 They object in the second place the form of Blessing, *Num.* 6. The forms of Psalms composed by David, The Lords prayer. The Argument is thus, *If it were lawful for Christs disciples to use the Lords prayer, and for the church to use the form of blessing directed by God himself,* Num. 6. *And for the church in Davids time, to use his forms of Psalms: Then it is lawful now for ministers having the gift of*

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Prayer ordinarily to perform their ministerial acts in Prayer, by the forms prescribed not immediately by God, but by men, and those no prophets, nor persons divinely inspired, &c.

But the former was lawful, therefore the latter is also lawful. We deny the consequence, not onely because we do not think, That God ever intended the *form of blessing* should syllabically be used so often as the Priest blessed the people; but onely, That the name of the Lord to that sense should be lifted up upon them Nor that Christ ever intended to enjoin his disciples the syllabical-use of the *Lords prayer*. Nor do we read, That either the former *blessing*, nor the latter *Prayer* was so ordinarily used: But we find diverse forms both of prayer, and blessing used. But also, Because we think no man hath such authority now to prescribe in matters of worship as God, and Christ unquestionably had; or as David, and other holy Penmen of Scripture had. Which this argument must suppose, or the consequence must be false. But we have spoke to this fully before.

§. 5 A third Argument is this,

What is matter of meer decency, order, and circumstance in the worship of God, may be lawfully commanded by Superiours, and lawfully obeyed by Inferiours:

But this is matter of meer decency, order, and circumstance; Ergo.

We deny the *Minor*, order is not concerned in it, that onely respecteth *prius & posterius*; first and last. Nothing can be *decent* but the contrary must be

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indecent, there is no *medium participationis* in the case. No sober person will say, it is *indecent* for ministers having the gift of prayer to pray without the prescribed forms of others, Circumstances relate to actions as humane actions, but the prescribed forms of others in prayer, have no such relation to prayer, it may be performed without them. They must be therefore (if at all circumstances) appropriated to the action *quatenus a religious action*, and no such circumstances we conceive are left to mens liberty to determin, being properly *Ceremonies, or religious rites*, which in them have something of homage to God.

§. 6 A Fourth Objection, or Argument is this, *If all the essentials to prayer may be found or observed in the prescribed forms of others, Then the minister may in his publick ministry use them:*

But all the essentials to prayer may be found, and observed in the use of the prescribed forms of others.

To justify this, some tell us, That matter and form are the onely essentials to prayer. Others tell us, Due affections and grace may be equally exercised in praying by a form. To which we answer, That *Prayer* may be considered either in *Facto esse*, as a composition of *words* and *phrases*: so indeed, The *essentials* are the same as of all other compounded things, *Matter* and *Form*. The due matter of prayer is, *Things agreable to the will of God: The form in the name of Jesus Christ*. We most freely grant, That both these may be found in a *form composed and prescribed by men*. What follows? *Therefore this form*

is a good form, and it may be used. It is granted, it may lawfully be read for *instruction* by the best; it may be used as an help for *children*, or *men* that have not yet attained the gift of prayer. All this is true. But we are considering *Prayer* not in this notion, but as an *human Action*; and say, That a *religous action* a piece of homage and worship which his minister in the Congregation puts up to him, To this action, It is essentially necessary, not onely that he confesseth sins, putteth up petitions, &c. according to the will of God, and that with a sutable exercise of Grace, and Sanctified affections, but that. 1 *He useth an audible voice*, and this all will grant. 2 Say we, that if he hath them, *he useth his own gifts*; not other mens. He thus understands his Lord saying to him, *Go and preach*, why should he otherwise interpret him, saying to him, *Go and pray*? When he hath bidden him minister his gifts ὡς ἔδωκε, and *according to the Grace given, so to minister.* Rom. 12. Besides we have declared both our judgments as that, and our reasons why we so judge, That he who prayeth by reading or reciting the prescribed forms of others, cannot pray with the same *Attention, Intention and fervour, essentiall things* to acceptable prayer.

§. 7. But then (saith a Reverend person) *for a child, or scholar to use a form which is prescribed by his Father, or Master would be unlawful.* Let us turn it into a form.

What is not unlawful for a child, or scholar (we will add to advantage the argument, or save our selves labour

bour of more words) *or a private person, that hath not attained to the gift of prayer, or such whom the church is enforced to use in publick ministrations for want of persons better qualified to do in prayer, That is not unlawful for ministers to do ordinarily, to whom God hath given the gift:*

But to pray by the prescribed forms of others ordinarily, in private or publick, is not unlawful for children, or grown persons, or such ministers; Ergo.

The Assumption is granted, but the Proposition is unquestionably false, sincerity is accepted, not *according to what a man hath not, but according to what he hath.* We do believe many an honest hearted minister in the beginning of reformation, who never preached, nor yet was able to do it, was accepted of God in reading good Homilies: But we do not think, That any who were able to preach otherwise was also accepted. We trust, He that hath ten talents must improve them all, though it had been enough for him that *had but one*, if he had not *laid it up in a napkin*, but improved that for his masters glory, and advantage. This Argument therefore onely proveth, That forms of prayer are *not in themselves unlawful to be used*, not that they may not be so to some persons whose circumstances vary. Our question is onely about Ministers to whom God hath given the gift, or who onely want it through their own default or negligence.

§. 8 But Sixthly, A great *Doctor* (and that in a publick Sermon, as well as diverse others in their prin-

ted discourses) tell us, That there is a command for Prescribed forms of prayer to be used in the church under the gospel. 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. A text urged (weakly enough) by the author of the book called *Pulpit conceptions, Popular deceptions*, and *Mr. Falconer*, p. 109. tells us.

„ That many have thought that the Apostle had „ a special eye to the composure of such forms of „ prayer, agreable to what the Baptist, and our „ Saviour prescribed to their disciples, in command- „ ing *Timothy* the Governour of the church, That „ amongst the things which concerned his behaviour „ in the church of God, *Ch.* 3. 15. *First of all* „ *prayers, intercessions, supplications, and giving of* „ *thanks, should be made for all men*, &c.

For this he quotes *Dr. Hammond in loc.* And addeth „ Though the phrase ποιεῖσθαι δεήσεις may „ either signify, That prayers be put up to God, or „ that they be composed, in this place it may well „ intend both, *&c.*

It is enough for us that our *Reverend Brother* justly alloweth, That ποιεῖσθαι δεήσεις *Prayers be made*, doth not necessarily signify, That church Governours should make Liturgies for all Ministers, from whence it followeth, That this text will afford no cogent argument for such an institution. Nor will any other text give relief in the cause, coming in as an auxiliary to this. It is indeed a plain command for *Timothy* in his publick ministry himself to pray, and to enjoin all inferiour ministers to do the like, but we have produced other, and those plainer

plainer texts enough directing ministers how to perform their ministerial acts, *by ministring their gift according to the grace given, Stirring up, not neglecting their gift*, &c. And because our reverend Brother is a little critical with the verb ποιέω, we shall onely tell him that he knows that ποιητὴς a Poet comes from it, and we know him so much a scholar, as he would judge him but a miserable *poet*, That should onely read, or recite copies of verses composed by others. If indeed *prayers, intercessions, supplications, & giving of thanks could not be made for all men* unless superiors prescribed, or ministers used the prescribed forms of others, there were something in this text: But it is an observable vanity, that when men are possessed of some singular notion hard to be made out, they fancy every verse almost in Scripture to be for their purpose. The *Doctor* saw the word *Prayers* here, and he fancieth it must be a *Liturgy*, or *Prayer-book*. Just like another who meeting in the epistle of Peter, with a phrase of *Offering up Spiritual Sacrifices to God*, runs away with as much confidence of a new ἱερεῖον for a *Liturgy*, though there be not a word for it near the text. Yea, and in his heat runs down the Puritans arguments in his way like durt: But with this discretion, That though it is like he saw some better forces of theirs standing by, then any which he tried his skill upon, yet he thought fit rather to pursue the chase of the left wing of *Pigmies*, then to stand to hazard a battel with some other men of war that faced him all the while.

§. 9 The Author of the *Pulpit conceptions* hath

(he thinks) found out some other expres Scripture. 1 Cor. 1. 10. *That you all speak the same thing.* Rom. 15. 6. *That you may with one mind, and one mouth glorify God.* And he is hugely confident, That the first mentioned text, is not to be forced into a contrary interpretation. Ridiculous! Is there in that text a word concerning Prayer? Is that the Theme the Apostle is there treating of? Were the Divisions (for a Remedy as to which he gives this advice) about Prayer? It not the Apostle both to the *Corinthians*, and *Romans* giving Catholick directions? And will not then this Argument prove that not onely *Liturgies:* But the same Liturgies *verbatim* must be used in all churches to the end of the world? But let us turn this into an argument, That the *Doctor* may see we will deny him no just advantage, which his learning may have upon us, more then we are aware of.

Those who are to speak the same thing, and are with one mouth to glorify God, may lawfully, or must use set forms of Prayer: But Christians are to speak the same thing, and with one mouth to glorify God; Ergo.

The Major is to be proved, and when he hath proved it, let him consider whether the same argument will not prove, That in all families, and closets also the same form must not be used? And whether such another learned Topick, will not prove, That all ministers must use the same syllables, words and sentences in preaching? Yea, and in all their more private religious discourses, Certainly sober persons ever thought that by these expressions, the Apostle

Apostle intended onely an unity in the matter, and substance of Religion, not in words, and syllables expressing their conceptions about it, either to God or men. But to do the *Dr.* right he lays his *Argument* from these texts in a little different form, we will not conceil it from our Readers, *Valeat, quantum valere potest.* We are contending for truth not for mastery. His form is this.

That service of God which is consonant to holy Scripture is lawful, The service of God performed by a prescribed Liturgy is consonant to holy Scriptures. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Rom. 15. 6 Ergo, *It is lawful.*

Lawful is a diminitive term, for if those texts prove it, it is necessary: for it is doubtless necessary for Christians *with one mouth to glorify God*, and to *speak the same thing* in the sense of that text. But it may be the *Doctor* thought so, and intended to deliver hard arguments in softer words. The *Dr.* guesseth right, the Assumption is that we deny. He proveth it, by these two texts thus,

That Service of God whereby we declare, That we are perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, whereby we all speak the same thing, and with one mouth glorify God: That service is consonant to the holy Scripture, 1 Cor. 1. 10. Rom. 15. 6.

But the service of God by a prescribed Liturgy is such; Ergo.

The *Major proposition*, having its matter necessary, and being as to its form indefinite, according to

to our Rule in *Logick*, must as to its form be reduced to an *Universal*, and be rendered thus,

Every service of God whereby we declare, That we are perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, whereby we do all speak the same thing, and with one mouth glorify God. Is consonant to Scripture:

But the service of God by a prescribed Liturgy is such; Ergo.

Let us also have liberty to assume upon the foundation laid in the Major proposition.

But all ministers preaching in the same words, and syllables is a Service of God whereby they might declare, That they are joined in one mind, and in the same judgment, whereby they might speak the same thing, and with one mouth glorify God; therefore. That also were necessary if commanded, or however is lawful.

Doth not every ordinary Reader see the vanity of this Argument? But more directly, Have we not heard of such maximes as; *Bonum ex causis integris, Malum e quolibet defectu.*

Is it enough to make a piece of Divine worship consonant to the will of God in Scripture, That one or two texts of Scripture have a general term, or expression or two (as well applicable to any other pieces of Divine service, as that in dispute) from which in the appearance of the letter of it, a conclusion may be drawn, seeming to conclude an act, mode, or mean of worship lawful, though justified by no particular precepts, or examples: yea, and appearing contrary to diverse other texts of holy writ? To

make

make an act of worship consonant to Scripture. It must be such as to the matter of it, and as to the manner so performed, that it shall not be dissonant to any part of Scripture either in the Letter, or Reason of it. To conclude then, when this Author hath proved. 1 That the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Rom.* 15. 6. is giving a rule strictly about Acts of worship.

2 That in the sense of those texts Christians cannot speak the same thing, and glorify God with the same mouth, unless they speak the same words and syllables.

3 That nothing we have said proved this mode, or mean of worship dissonant to any part of the reveiled mind, and will of God. He will then have set this lame argument upon its leggs again, and may expect a new assault; but till that time, we surcease from farther labour about it, and leave our Readers to judge what consequence there is in it. We think it is the first time ever those texts were otherwise then cursorily, and in loose discourse brought to serve in the service of prescribed Liturgies generally imposed; and we hope we shall hear of it no more. We are sure it will not come a volunteer into the service. This is all we ever heard pretended from Scripture or the reason of Scripture to justify the lawfulness of an *universal* impoposing of forms upon ministers, or an *universal use* of them (if imposed) by ministers. In the next place they argue from Reason.

§. 10 We remember (in the seventh place) that the

the Author of a Pamphlet wrote some years since, called *Aaron Bimnucha*, argueth thus,

That which a man may determin himself unto, To that he may be determined by his superiour.

His reason is evident, because, were it not in it self lawful, he might not himself choose it, or determin himself to it: Now he should have assumed, *But a minister in the Ordinary performance of his ministerial Acts in publick Prayer, may determin himself to the prescribed forms of men.* Had he thus assumed, we should have denied the Assumption, but he onely assuming, *That a man may lawfully determin himself to the use of forms*, hath not concluded against our question. We do grant, That a minister may sometimes determin himself to *forms composed by himself for his own use*: but that is nothing at all to the matter in question. But yet neither can we agree the Major, That *a Christian may by his superiour be determined to whatsoever, he hath a liberty to determin himself.* A man may in a great measure determin himself to a state of marriage, or single life, And in case of marriage as to the particular woman which he will make his wife, he may determin himself. A young man may determin himself, as to his trade and course of life, whether he will be, a *Merchant*, or a *Lawyer*, or a *Scholar*; may therefore he be lawfully determined by his superior in all these things? And by the way, if our Opposites say no; they desert their Principle. *That what is in it self lawful, becomes necessary if it be commanded.* Will they have us restrain our discourse

to

to things in worship? Surely a minister may lawfully determin himself never to *preach without notes*; nor without writing out his Sermon at length, may he therefore (think we) be lawfully by Superiours determined unto such things? May the Superiours by their command make it sinful for a minister to preach without notes? Or till he hath written his Sermon *Verbatim*? An hundred things of this nature might be instanced in.

§. 11 It is worthy of the Readers observation, how the aformentioned author (and that in the pursuit of this argument) would persuade us to be *Papists*, acting contrary to the singular judgment of our own consciences, out of an abounding *Voluntary Humility*, and judging, and that as to matters of our particular practice, upon which our eternity depends, As the miscarriage in them may lay the soul under the guilt of sin, *That the Judgment of Superiours is better then our own.* Whence he would infer not onely a *lawfulness*, but *a necessity* incumbent upon a reasonable soul which is by its principles obliged to follow what is best, to obey men that are our superiours contrary to our own opinion, and Judgment. If that author can but prevail in this, he hath but one thing more to do, (which too, every Romish-priest and Jesuite will help him in) that is, To evince to men that the *Bishop of Rome*, in all Spiritual things, is all Christians superiour. And he hath done the Popes business as effectually as he could have done it, had he been hired to it by a *Cardinals cap*. But both *St. Paul.* Col. 2. 23. *and Bp Davenant* (as before cited

cited on that text have told us, what kind of *Humility* this is.

§. 12 An eighth Argument used by some is this, *The people that join with a minister in prayer, pray by a form. The ministers prayer is but a form to them and limitation of them*, &c. *Therefore the minister may lawfully do it.* We have fully answered this before but in short. 1 The Question is about *vocal-prayer*, the people are onely required to pray *mentally*, this is quite another species of Prayer. In *mental-prayer*, God onely requireth the exercise of grace. In ministerial-vocal-prayer, he also requireth the *exercise of gifts:* And that not such gifts as remotely, but such as specifically relate to the Act. 2 It is one thing barely to worship in prayer, Another thing to minister to others in worshipping. Our question is what is lawful for him that doth not onely worship, but ministreth in worshipping?

§. 13 Ninthly, say some, *If a minister in publick be suffered to pray by conceived-prayer, he may vent Blasphemy, Heresy, Nonsense, and how shall the people say, Amen?* This also we have fully before answered. But, 1 This argument holds equally if not with much more advantage against any other preaching then by reading, or reciting other mens Sermons. 2 If the minister doth vent *error, blasphemy*, &c. we hope every one hath his *Amen*, within his own teeth, which he may withold, if he hear Petitions come out his mouth not according to the will of God, nor, 3 Is it impossible, that men may do the like

like by miscalling or misplacing words in reading, or reciting forms.

§. 14 But *Tenthly*, Forms they tell us are *necessary for Uniformity*, but we must first enquire; whether *Uniformity be necessary*, or at all desireable in the sense we here take it? Where by it, we understand nothing but an *uniformity* in *Sentences*, *Words*, and *Syllables* used in prayer. *Unity* is indeed a beauteous thing, whether it be in *Affections* or *Judgment*: So is *Uniformity*, if understood of a worship of God in the same *solemn time*, That is on the *Sabbath-day*, and by the same *specifical Acts of worship*, or *As to the matter of prayer*: Thus far all sober men are agreed. We all observe the Sabbath, we all on the *Sabbath* publickly *Read the Word*, *Pray*, *Sing*, *Preach*, &c. In our prayers we all *Confess our sins*, *put up our petitions to God for good things which we or others need*, *and give God thanks for good things which we or others have received*: here now is a great and beauteous *Uniformity*, we all *speak the same thing*, *do the same thing*, and on the *same day*. But how shall it be ever proved, That that pitiful thing called *Uniformity in Words*, *and Syllables*, *and Phrases* was ever desired of God, or that it ever came into his, or his Sons heart? Or that it is acceptable to him? Or that it hath more beauty in it then would be in a Congregation where all men wear the same coloured clothes? Or had the very same lines in their faces, or the same fashioned periwiggs upon their heads. 2. *The Beauty of no end can justify any sinful mean*, Gods glory is the noblest end, the Apostle hath told us, That it needeth not our ly to promove it. 3 If it be lawful

for men to fancy ends, as fine things, which God never ſpake of: It is no wonder if they can find no means adequate to them, but ſuch as are juſtifiable by no *Right Reaſon, or Divine Rule.* The Princes of Babylon had an end to deſtroy *Daniel*, they ſaw that (except in the matter of his God) nothing was to be found againſt him: In their opinion therefore it was neceſſary to eſtablish an uniformity *in prayers*, yet not (that we read off) in words, but as to the object of the Act, All muſt be commanded to pray onely to *Darius* (poſſibly there might be ſome form limited) but the end was naught, ſo was the mean. 4 But ſuppoſe *Uniformity*, ſyllabical-uniformity Neceſſary, Lawful, Beautiful, Deſirable, and certainly deſirable it is as to Doctrines of Religion and ſome particular terms, and phraſes, by which they may ſafely be expreſſed: We remember what a difference was made both in the church, and the Doctrine of it, by ὁμοούσιος & ὁμοιούσιος. How yet ſhall forms of prayer help us with it without forms of Sermons too, and a conſtant ſticking to the uſe of them, and no other.

§. 15 In the next place cometh *Ireneus Freeman* in, and telleth us in *p.* 38. of his *Reaſonableneſs of Divine ſervice*, „ That in caſe liberty be granted to „ ſome to do that for which they have a gift, it will „ provoke others who have it not to imitate them. „ He adds, If the denial of liberty to ſome who have „ the gift, be to Cut the man fit for the bed: the „ granting of ſuch a liberty as we deſire would be to „ Stretch a man fit for the bed. Now ſeing both will „ ly together, he ſaith, it is more equitable, That

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„ the tall man should pull up his leggs: then that „ the low man should be put to the rack. The question in issue is, *Whether it be lawful universally to impose upon ministers, Forms of Prayer to be ordinarily used in their publick ministrations? Or for ministers, whom God hath furnished with the gift of prayer, to perform their ministerial acts ordinarily by the use of those forms, though imposed?* Yes, saith *Mr. Freeman*, for it is *necessary*. Every thing say we which is necessary, either is so from nature, or a *supervening command*. The first is not pretended, But the Second. It is necessary, because *Magistrates or Superiours command us*, and God hath commanded us to obey our Superiours. We say, God hath onely commanded us *to obey our Superiours in things where in we may obey them, and not sin*. Which say we in this case we cannot. You may saith *Mr. Freeman*, And why? Because it is *necessary*, If this *Medium* be good, It must be made so by some *precept of God particularly relating to this case*, not by the general precepts of Gods word to *obey our Superiours*, For the thing must first be *agreed lawful*, before we can have in it any superiour, but God onely. Now whether, This use of forms be so or no, is the matter in question? How then doth what he saith evince the necessity of them. 2 All that he saith amounts but to a contingent disorder, which may happen upon a liberty given by some to use their gifts in prayer. But shall a contingent danger be pleaded in bar to a duty think we? Or shall the sin of another be sufficient to justify our superiour in prohibiting us from the discharge of what is our duty?

3 For his *Similitude*, it is more then ordinarily unlucky, for whereas we say no similitude runs on all four feet, This is so unhappy, As to halt on all four: for surely in the case as stated by him, It is not the Magistrate that stretcheth that confident little fellow he talks of, or puts him upon the rack. So as the Question is, Whether the superiours ought to gratify those little persons lusts? Or to give liberty to those whom God hath fitted for their work, to use the means which he hath immediately furnished them with, in order to those specifical performances? But our author will not yet have done he go's on.

§. 16 „ In case liberty be given to an officer to „ do something, for which he hath a gift, and the „ denial of it to another officer of the same society, „ which hath no such ability, but cannot be spared „ any more then the former, would make the weaker „ officer, contemptible, and useless: Especially if he „ be the weaker, onely in that case, but far stronger in others: in this case, as he thinkes, the first „ mentioned liberty ought to be denied to the offi- „ cer first mentioned.

The Reason lies in this narrow compass, *It is necessary to impose forms of prayer upon all ministers, and they may lawfully be used by all ministers: That those ministers, who are otherwise useful, and of whom an use must be made, may not be made contemptible to the people, tho they have not such abilities, & gift of Prayer.*

Every one sees, That the truth of this depends upon diverse *Hypotheses.*

1 *That a man may be a true and perfect minister of Christ, and yet not have the gift of Prayer.* This we

we deny, Believing God sends none into his work, not fitted for it.

2 *That the church cannot be without such ministers, as are destitute of this Gift.* This we also deny and think, she may better be without them, then furnished with them.

3 *That some ministers praying by forms will make them contemptible*, we are apt to believe this hath something of truth in it. But they who urge it, are concerned to reconcile it with what they ordinarily say, That the greater part of the people are for forms, onely an inconsiderable number of singular fanaticks. If so, surely they will the more reverence such as keep to them. When these are all proved, it may be seasonable to inquire upon these two things.

1 *Whether it be not the sin of any man to thrust himself into the work of the ministry, or of superiors to admit him into it, who hath not the gift of prayer?* He is not fitted for his work; therefore not called, or sent of God to it. The gift of prayer is what we question, whether God denieth to any, who will but duly study *the Holy Scriptures, their own hearts, and their people* as they ought, The three books which *Luther* thought sufficient to accomplish a Divine? A minister that cannot pray, is to us as much *nonsense* as a workman that cannot work. Now shall the sins of any rule Superiours conscientious in their Government, to restrain others in what is either their duty or their liberty? What kind of Divine is he, who knoweth not what God is? or under what name to speak unto him? What sin is? and what is Commanded, and forbidden in the law of God?

What those things are or many of them at least, which aggravate sin, and make it more exceeding heinous? What men have need off both for their souls and bodies? And what according to the will of God they may ask? What good things he or others ought to give thanks for, *&c*? Or that is not more then ordinarily versed in the Holy Scriptures? Which knowledge being attained, surely (if the man can but speak) the gift of prayer is gained, if want of exercise, and neglect of practice hindreth not.

2 *Whether men can have the gift of preaching that want the gift of prayer?* We doubt it. The same knowledge being necessary to preaching, that is necessary unto prayer, and nothing more (as we said before) being necessary unless frequent exercise.

3 *Whether that Church which hath twice ten thousand Christians who want not the gift of Prayer, can but by her own fault want ministers who have that gift? Considering*, That as we judge, The Apostle, *Heb.* 5. 1. hath given us the perfect notion of a minister in the description of the High-priest, he is but; *a person taken from men, and ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he might offer Prayers and Praises*, Preach and Administer the holy Sacraments. If a church hath ministers that she hath *manu errante* ordained, which can neither pray, nor preach: she may *clave non errante* cast them out, and ordain those that are not yet ordained, but fitter for the work.

§. 17 In short our *Hypothesis* is, *That it is lawful for such, to whom God hath given the gift of prayer, ordinarily to perform their ministerial acts in prayer by the prescribed forms of others: is not to be overthrown by*

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an argument drawn from necessity; Because there can be no *necessity of sinning*. And whereas all necessity ariseth either from nature, or the *Original will of God*; as the First cannot be pretended, so supposing the thing unlawful, To say it is necessary in the Second sense, is to blaspheme. Neither can there be any necessity in this case but what sin makes, either the sinful commands of men: or the sinful lazines of the minister.

§. 18 We shall onely say this, If it be necessary that some of the places for publick preaching, should be in the power of some who shall have so little of conscience, as either for a little mony, or to make a match, or to gratify a friend, or to ascertain themselves obsequious servants, will present most unable, and unworthy persons; And that the Bishop should be under the danger of A *Quare non admisit*, If when the Clerk cometh, he doth not institute him, if he be but able to turn nine or ten lines of the Thirty nine Articles into Latine, which a child of eight or nine year old may do? We say, If there be a necessity of these things there may be a necessity, that not onely *Forms of Prayer*, but of Sermons too should be made to capacitate these men to do any thing like the sacred acts of their office. But this is a woful, sinful necessity, which nothing but the corruptions of ages, and manners have made, and cannot infer either the goodnes of the end, or any just reason for imposing forms upon all, nor can infer a farther necessity for forms of Prayer then for forms of Sermons. He that dreamed of an absolute necessity when he burnt his shins by the fire, that the chimny should be pulled down, and set farther

off, might with less labour and charge too have removed his leggs to a farther distance from the fire. And we think, That those who dream of an absolute necessity of *forms of prayer* for all; because some ministers or that go for ministers, can do nothing in prayer without, might with less guilt, and reproach to our church cure that disease, & destroy that necessity, which is but a *Chimera* made by their own fancies.

§. 19 The Reverend Author of *Libertas Ecclesiastica, p.* 98. *&c.* hath given us Four or Five farther Reasons, as he calls them, for *forms of prayer*, which in the last place we will consider.

„ He saith, *Hereby a fit, true, right, and well* „ *ordered way of worship in addresses to God may be* „ *best secured to the church in the publick service of God:* „ *that neither God, nor his worship may be dishonoured.*

„ *There being many easily discernable ways of con-* „ *siderable miscarriage in the pubiick offices of the* „ *church, even by those who err not in the Doctrines of* „ *Religion.*

To which we answer. 1 That alone is a *fit, true, right and well ordred worship* which God hath instituted. Worship is his Homage, and there's all the reason in the world he should prescribe to his own Homage.

2 That God in the Church should be *truly, fitly, rightly*, and in due *order worshipped* is reasonable, but that it should aforehand be secured, That he should be so worshipped by ministers, who are but men and may err, is not possible. Nor will *forms* secure it, which ministers may if they will be careless (and many have done it) read falsely and disorderly enough. There is therefore no security to be had

had in the case, caution may be used. The Rulers may say to *Archippus*, *Take heed to thy ministry.*

3 We do think, That for twenty years together. The worship of God was truly, fitly, rightly, and in a well ordered manner performed in hundreds of congregations in *England* where no forms of prayer were used & in the eye of all sober, reasonable men, better, then where they were used; we therefore see nothing here but a flourish of words.

§. 20 His Second reason is, „That needful, „ comprehensive petitions for all common and ordi- „ nary Spiritual and Outward wants of our selves, and „ others, with fit thanksgivings, may not in the „ publick supplications of the church be omitted, „ which (considering men as they are) can no other „ way be so well, or at all assured.

To which we answer, *Pudet hæc opprobria nobis & dici potuisse*, &c. Let it be spoken to the shame of the church of God in *England*, and it shall be for a lamentation in it, if in a church whose territories are so large, there cannot be found persons enough sufficient, without others prescriptions to them, to put up full, and comprehensive petitions, not onely for common and ordinary, but for emergent and extraordinary Spiritual and Outward wants of any persons with fit thanksgivings. But *Secondly*, If there be not men enough to do this, yet certainly there are some and very many ministers of all persuasions that can do it, what need therefore is there farther, Then that such *Forms be composed, extant and left at liberty.* Must those be restrained that are able to perform their duty, because there are others, that either

cannot or will not set themselves to the due performance of it. Besides, That this Argument holds stronger for forms of Sermons too to be imposed: For those who know how in preaching to reveil to people the whole counsel of God, most certainly know how to put up full, and comprehensive petitions for all common and ordinary Spiritual & Outward wants of themselves and others.

§. 21 *Mr. Falconers* Third Reason is, „ That „ the Affections, and hearts of pious, and Reli„ gious men, may be more devout, and better „ united in their presenting their Services to God; „ where they may consider beforehand, what par„ ticular prayers, and thanksgivings they are to „ offer up, and come the more ready, and prepared „ to join in them. This is an advantage of which „ many are deprived by a bad temper of mind, sucked „ in by prejudice, or swallowed down by careleſness.

To which we answer, that in this pretended reason, we can see nothing but words. Are not we to ask of God for our selves, or others *all good things* under such limitations as his word directeth, submitting our petitions for temporary things to the will, and wisdom of God? Needs there any more when we come to prayer, then a general composure of our Spirits to seek God for all good things we or others stand in need of? If not, what needs such a particular foreknowledge of the words and phrases to be used in asking. If the minister transgresseth his Rule and asks what is not according to the will of God, (and that he may do by reading forms falsely) may not people withold their, *Amen*? The

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Affections and hearts of all good people (though the publick prayers be not by prescribed forms) are united. 1 *As to the duty*, They all say to God, *Thy face will wee seek.* 2. *As to the matter of the duty*, To *confess all sin* Original, Actual, To beg of God whatsoever they or other stand in need of, which God hath promised to give. For the particular phrases, There is no such need of a foreknowledge, nor will it at all (as we we have proved before) promove, but rather hinder devotion and affection.

§. 22 His Fourth Reason is. „ *That such difficult* „ *parts of church-offices as Baptism, and the Supper of the* „ *Lord, the matter of which requireth great conside-* „ *ration, That they may be aright and clearly expressed,* „ *(as both Conformists, and many Nonconformists* „ *acknowledge) & is evident by the many disputes about* „ *them, by men neither of mean parts, nor dangerous* „ *designs; may by a considerate care, in the composing* „ *of a form be so framed, That men of greatest under-* „ *standings may with readiest assent entertain them, and* „ *that they may be sufficiently vindicated against the* „ *the boldest opposers.*

We do confess that we have met with some of our Brethren who lay some stress on this, But we are no more taken with meer words from *Noncon.* then from other men. And we cannot understand, What there is in the Administration of the Sacraments, that makes *Forms* of Prayer, *&c.* necessary. For the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, where (if any where) it seemes most necessary. What is there in that Administration, more then?

1 *The Sanctification or Consecration of the elements,*

2 *The*

2 *The Distribution of them, and words used in the distribution.*
3 *The Application of the General acts of the ministerial office, Prayer and Exhortation to that particular action.*

For the first the Apostle hath taught us that *Sanctification, or Consecration* is by the *word & Prayer*. The word is nothing but the *words of Institution*, which are in Scripture. The *Reading* of which declares Christs separation of those elements for that use: and our separation of them in his name, for and during that time, for that ordinance. For other words and forms of consecration, we know no need of them, no warrant for them, and believe them of ill original and consequence. Now any one that can read a form, can read the Scripture.

For the *distribution* of them, It is no further work then every hand can do, what words to use, Our Saviour hath set down, from which we know no need to vary. In using of them can be no errour, in deviating from them indeed there may.

For the Application of *Exhortation & Prayer* to that act, surely he that can *Pray and Preach* can do that.

The like is to be said of the other Sacrament, so that a Righteous law that all should keep to the Scriptural-institution is enough, we think in that case: And wonder at their fancies, That think of such a special need of a form in those cases, believing no pretence of necessity, but what depends upon a fancy of a reasonableness to add to the Divine institution in the case of which we cannot be convinced. For God-fathers and God-mothers and Forms of questions to be propounded to them, we understand neither necessity, nor use of them: much less any particular Forms of words (besides those the Scripture gives us) for Consecration, or to be used in the Distribution of the elements in the Supper. The points in dispute can this way come into no dispute that we know, nor any error infused into people. It is mens varying from the Institution in this case, which alone hath given advantage to the *Envious one to sow tares*. If any minister having the elements of bread and wine before him shall read, I The words of Institution as delivered (by the Evangelists, or the Apostle Paul) Then solemnly praying to God, First, *That as he had instituted that ordinance, for the remembrance of Christ, The shewing forth of his death, The communion of his body and bloud*, &c. *So he would at that time bless it to those ends*, &c. *Pardoning his peoples want of preparation and accepting them in their desires to honour him in his own institutions*, &c. Or to that purpose. Then giving the bread,

bread, repeating onely our Saviours words, with but a small and that necessary change. *Take, eat, This is the body of Christ* [in stead of *my body*] *which was broken for you.* And after the cup, repeating onely Christs words, *This cup is the new Testament in the bloud of Christ*, &c. We would fain know if this man (concluding all with a prayer, & hymn of thanksgiving) had not duly administred the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. If he had, what need is there of *forms of words* in this case, other then what the holy Scriptures have given us: For as to the Prayer before and after, as we conceive him a pitiful minister and very unfit to be trusted with that office, (which often calleth him to pray upon particular emergent occasions, for which a form cannot be made ready) if he cannot without it apply his petitions, to the particular businesse in hand, viz. *The administration of the Sacrament*: So if he distrusteth himself, he may compose himself a form of prayer fitted for that purpose. For the administration of that ordinance is seldom or never so sudden, as to surprice a minister. So for the other Sacrament, Will any one dare to say, That a lawful minister, (having water before him) who shall first beg of God, *To own and bless his own institution, To wash away the sin of the person to be baptized with his own bloud, And to grant that it may be born again of water and the Spirit*, &c. Or to the like purpose. And then having had a previous knowledge, That the parent is a believer *i. e.* one who either hath a true faith, or maketh profession of such true faith: shall take water, and *poure, or sprinkle it upon* the childs face, or dip the person in it, saying, *I. Baptize thee in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, is not truly Baptized? A prayer and thanksgiving usually concludes the Action. But what need here of a form more then the Scripture hath furnished us with, or directed us to? May one minister say, *I. Baptize thee*, &c. Another, *Let this person be Baptized*, &c. A third, *Be thou Baptized*, &c? For our parts we think the difference not so much, as to require a prescribed form to reconcile: and should not doubt, but the person were truly Baptized, under any of those variations of words. Water being *poured*, or *sprinkled on it*, and the action declared to be in the name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. We conclude as we said before, That we can see nothing in either Sacrament but the inventions of men, superadding to the institutions of the gospel diverse rites, and actions of which Christ never spake, which makes any pretence for a need of

Forms

Forms in the administration of them. There being nothing to be done in them that requireth any special ability comparable to that which *Preaching & Praying* according to the various states of the church, and the particular cases of souls in it doth require.

§. 23 *Mr. Falconers* Fift Reason is thus by himself expressed, „ To be an evidence to other churches, and future times „ after what way and manner we worship God, and that both „ the matter and expression of our service to him is sound and „ pious, in our general and common worship. And this may „ be a full Testimony, That such a church receiving the true „ faith and expressing a right way of worship, is both a true, „ and in its measure a pure and incorrupt church.

We answer, 1 *Where hath God required the leaving any such Testimony?* 2 *If he had, forms of prayer had not been sufficient without forms of Sermons too.* 3 *While we declare our selves Christians, and that we worship God according to his word, we leave a sufficient Testimony, that we are a true church of God.* 4 *A confession of faith* publickly owned, & subscribed unto by all ministers (which we never opposed) doth far better effect this, which may be done, without making a new act or mode of worship.

§. 24 *Mr. Falconer* at last comes to this argument from example, which yet he doth not lay so much stress upon as to aver, They evince a necessity of Forms, but he thinks the countenance, the *lawfulness, and expediency of them.* For what he saith about the *Lords prayer*, it is answered by us before. In short, It reacheth not the case. There can be no conclusion from Christs power to the power of ordinary Governors now in the church: Or from the lawfulness of Christs disciples using a Form of prayer, dictated by Christ himself, in that time before his ascension, and the effusion of the Holy Ghost, to the lawfulness of ministers in after ages using, a bundle of forms, neither composed by Christ, nor by his Apostles. Besides the probabilities we have before offered, that even then when it was first given it was not intended for a form of words (nor do we ever read of it after so used) but as a more general direction for the ordinary matter of our prayers.

§. 25 As to what *Mr. Falconer* saith further of Scriptural-forms, it hath had its answer from us before *Chap.* 3. §. 37, *&c.* What he farther saith of the use of them in the Christian church, we have answered in that *Chap.* 3. §. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49. In short, We think we may say of this as we say of the

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Papists plea for themselves, From *Peters being at Rome.* If they could prove, That *forms of prayer were universally imposed upon the whole church, and used by all ministers in it* within 400 years after Christ, and so in the ages downward, it would not prove either the *lawfulness* of such general *Imposition or use*; but they shall never be able to prove it while they live. Let us therefore leave inquiring, What those who lived before us did, or thought might lawfully be done, and enquire what *Christ* and his *Apostles did*; or determined lawful to be done. While we are disputing, about what is *lawful* and *unlawful*, Authority, or practice is a lamentable argument, and will never be insisted on by wise and understanding men, but for want of such as are better and more cogent. It will be a very hard thing to justify all those things to be lawful, which were established by councils of as great antiquity as any they can pretend to for the establishment of *forms of prayer* to be universally used. And thus much may serve for an answer to all we have heard or met with pleaded for the lawfulness of a general imposition, or use of *forms of Prayer* in the church. We shall onely say, That our Brethren dealing with those who in their consciences judge them unlawful. We think were concerned to have proved them necessary. For certainly if Superiours will think themselves in the least obliged by the *Royal law of love*, they ought not with their *meat* (which they may *eat*, or *let alone*) command to be *eaten* or *not eaten* to destroy the souls of their inferiours for whom Christ died: Either by *tempting them* to do what in their consciences they think is sinful: or without necessity laying their souls under a guilt for disobeying them, if that be true, *That whosoever obeyeth not the command of his Superiour in a lawful thing, sinneth against God.*

Chap. X.

The Conclusion of the discourse, nothing said against any particular forms. No judging or condemning of those who judge otherwise in the case. No unlawfulness concluded to join with those who use pious forms. It is reasonable to propose, and recommend some forms leaving them at liberty. This the onely mean of Comprehension.

§. 1

That we may not be misunderstood in this discourse, we hope every ingenuous Reader will easily understand, That we have not levelled any thing in this discourse against any *particular forms or books of Prayers.* In the present question we

we suppose *Forms* as *good*, and *perfect* as the wit, and piety of men can make, and dispute their state in worship *i. e.* Whether they may be indiscriminatively *imposed* or *lawfully used* by such ministers as God hath blessed with the Gift of prayer? We have an equal *Reverence* for the First compilers of the *English Liturgy*, as the later compilers of the *Directory*, believing they both did famously in their generations. We onely think, The forms mistaken, in their opinion of the *lawfulness* of an *universall imposing*, *or use of them* in publick worship.

§. 2 Nor do we judge our selves infallible in our sententiments in this case; but *as we believe, so we speak*; so we must *practice*. We condemn not our brethren that judge otherwise and accordingly practice. We trust God will either to us or them reveil his mind that we shall at length know who are mistaken. Let not them judge and condemn us, we are in our dissents in the cases *anothers servants*: And that other we take to be our common *Lord and Master Jesus Christ*. Let us ἀληθεύοιν ἐν ἀγάπῃ according to the Apostles precept, strive for truth, & walk in what we apprehend to be truth, yet *walk in love*.

§. 3 We do not think it unlawful to join with another praying by the use of forms, provided the matter be good, and pious. We have in such praying nothing to do but to say, *Amen*. Whether he who ordinarily doth so, doth his ministerial duty? We confess, That we question. But that we may do our duty, though he faileth in his, we do not question. If any *Nonconformists* amongst the ministers, or people, judge otherwise, it must be upon some principle forreign to this discourse; such as that of *scandal*, &c. Which is not our business here to argue.

§. 4 We do think it not onely lawful but *Reasonable*, That some *Forms of Prayer* (or *Directions* at least) should be proposed, and commended, by the approbation of our Superiours and left at liberty. That those may use them for some time at least who have not attained to the gift of prayer, or may distrust themselves, or not have their usual natural liberty to express themselves in prayer. And indeed, this is the onely *medium* we can fancy for a just *Comprehension*, and restoring to an use in the church of all Valuable Dissenters. We humbly leave our thoughts in this case, and the Candor of our Spirits to the Judgment of all, Whether our superiors or Brethren in this famous church.

F I N I S.